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real kinky

Sarah Bird's Offbeat Rodeos

Mambo Panties—Fiction from Tom Doyal

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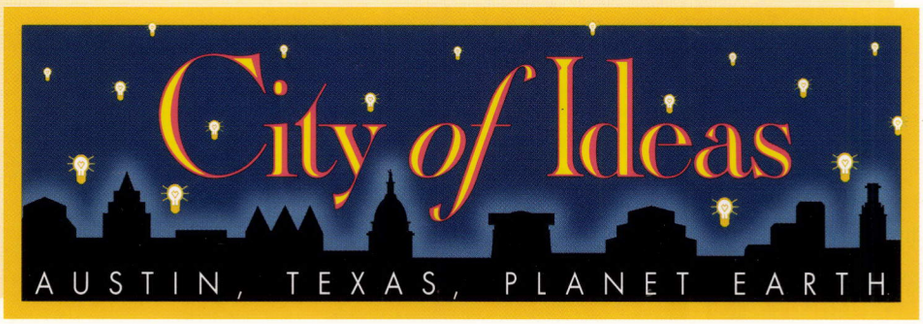
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

Maybe that should read "*Where's* the big idea?" Then the answer would be easy: Austin. Our city is the city of ideas. And it is with this concept in mind that Reagan National Advertising, in collaboration with GSD&M Advertising and TateAustin launch a campaign to call Austin "City of Ideas." In our view it beats the heck out of apples in New York, lights in Paris and, yes, even cars in Detroit because ideas are permanent, ongoing entities. Ideas in Austin are as loud as our music, as celebrated as our entrepreneurs and as educated as our universities. To call Austin "City of Ideas" speaks to the heart of a community that embraces its diversity, protects its environment and encourages new business. Austin is not a city of lights. It is a city of *light*. A city of ideas.



KIRK R. TUCK

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features

Real Kinky

by Alice Wightman. The irrepressible Kinky Friedman retakes center stage with a second career. **32**

Rodeo Drive

by Sarah Bird. The five-year, 50,000-mile odyssey to photograph the offbeat rodeos of the Southwest. **38**

Mambo Panties

by Tom Doyle. A short story. **44**

departments

Short Takes

Crews on Town Lake; private concerts bring the house down; Austin's finest don't soft pedal crime; lean cuisine; making the grade in East Austin. **5**

Books

by Kathleen Allen-Weber. **Dog-eared Afternoons.** The best reads from some of Austin's busiest people. **11**

FROM THE EDITOR

This magazine is about dreams. Three years ago some of us talked about starting something that was informative, relevant, well written and attractive. We wanted to read about our contemporaries and what they were doing, the places worth knowing about and the best things to see and do when there is little time to spare.

That's what *@Austin* is. It's about what's interesting and important in Austin, and there is a lot to know.

Once primarily a college town, Austin is now a fast-growing hub for a metropolitan area with more than one million people. It's an important center of government, education, film, entertainment and high technology in what has become the nation's second most populous state. For the last four years it has been one of the fastest-growing areas in the United States and widely known for its lively cultural scene, thriving business environment and colorful state and local characters. Headquarters to the nation's second largest public university system—with an endowment second only to Harvard—Austin attracts world-class scholars, lecturers, performers and exhibits. This is the only city of its size with a professional-level orchestra, ballet company and opera. Austin residents are among the most educated in the country.

It is no secret this city has an extraordinary pool of creative talent, and some of these people are a part of this magazine. It's written, photographed and produced by some talented individuals in town who usually go elsewhere to find an outlet for their ideas. Until now they have had few opportunities to publish their work in their hometown.

@Austin will tap some of that talent as it looks at creative people as well as newsmakers, sports along with art, fine food together with hamburgers and noodles, local as well as state issues. Since so many of us travel—on work or for leisure—we also mention things worth seeing nearby as well as around the state. In future issues *@Austin* will look at politics and business as well as fine arts. We also plan to showcase works of fiction and poetry—such as Tom Doyal's "Mambo Panties" on page 44 and Scott Wiggerman's "Asparagus" on page 12.

Tell us about your dreams and what you want to read about. Write to us at P.O. Box 5307, Austin, TX 78763 or send us e-mail at our Web site (www.austinmagazine.com). We hope you like our magazine.

Yours truly,

Alice Wightman

Alice Wightman

@austin

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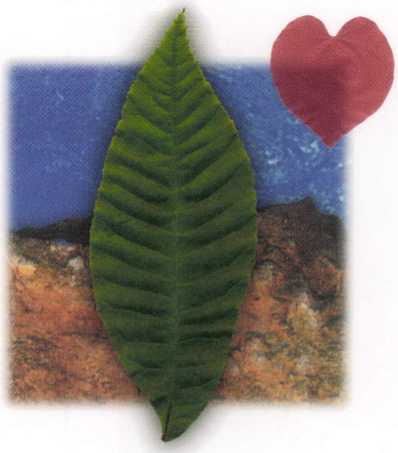
Film
by Karl Pallmeyer. **A Few Weeks in Another Town.** Austin is a preferred locale for Hollywood filmakers. **True Grit:** A day in the life of a movie extra. **13**

Music
by Glen Alyn. **The Play's the Thing.** Enjoying the show is a two-way street. **Great Performances:** A guide to favorite roadhouses. **Feedback:** Who's listening to what. **16**



Going Places
by Ann McCutchan. **Close Encounters.** Canoeing on the Colorado. **19**

Sports
by Nancy Bode Bussey. **Clay Feat.** Fired up over sporting clays. **21**

Style
by Pat Barbee. **The Haute Stuff.** Paula Lundgren's business is making you look good. **22**

Gardens
by Erin Hynes. **Sweet Imperfections.** Not planting by the rules. **24**

Dining
by Diane Payton Gomez. **Austin Steak Out.** A table-top tour of local steakhouses. **26**

Stateside
by Austin Bay. **Dangerous Liaisons.** The geography of change. **29**

Home
by Marie-Claire Quittelier. **Sublime Limes.** Simply perfect roast chicken. **31**

etcetera

EDITOR'S NOTE	1
FOOD & DINING	47
ON EXHIBIT	52
MUSEUMS	53

ON THE TOWN	56
LAST WORD	64

In A Neighborhood Known For Its Quaint Charm, A Visitor Can, In One Short Visit, Become Very Spoiled, Indeed.

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SHORT TAKES

TAYLOR JONES

Row Down

Crewing Around Town Lake

Every winter the University of Wisconsin rowing team makes Austin its home away from home during the holidays. Rowing is a varsity sport in Wisconsin, but icy waters back home make it necessary to head for warmer climes.

"Wisconsin has been coming (to Austin) about ten years," says Arnie Villarreal, Executive Director of the Austin Rowing Club, which has its headquarters next door to the Four Seasons Hotel on Town Lake. The Wisconsinites—a 60-member team and five coaches—drive 1,200 miles each way to use the club's rowing center, working out on the water twice a day.

Why Austin, when the Wisconsinites probably could find warm water a few hours north of here? Austin, Villarreal says, is considered the premier rowing center in Texas. Other urban areas in the state have what he calls "limited water." "Rowers in Dallas use Bachman Lake, which is near Love Field, and in Houston they use Clear Lake." The former is plagued by noise from nearby jets while the latter has a lot of boat traffic. Austin, on the other hand, offers a downtown lake where the only congestion is on the bridges crossing overhead. "This is a dedicated, recreational-use lake," Villarreal says.

The 300-member Austin Rowing Club also does a lot of promotional activities. In 1993 the club hosted the U.S. Rowing National Convention, and it advertises in *American Rowing*, a national publication. Villarreal says word is getting out. "All they have to do is come down here one time."

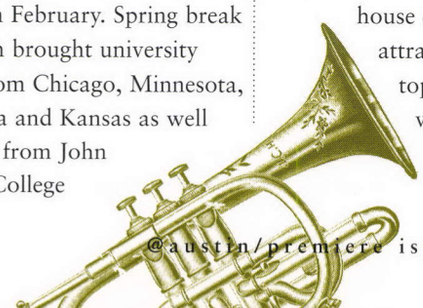
Austin generally draws university teams from Canada and the Midwest since most schools in the northeast train in Florida. This year was especially busy. After the Wisconsinites went back home, crews from the University of Toronto visited Austin in February. Spring break in March brought university teams from Chicago, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas as well as crews from John Carroll College (Ohio) and Macalester College (Minnesota).

"Look at the water," says Villarreal, pointing at the glassy surface of Town Lake, "it's well protected. It's protected from the wind, and there's no current. We've got six miles of beautiful water in a downtown setting."
Chuck Hamilton

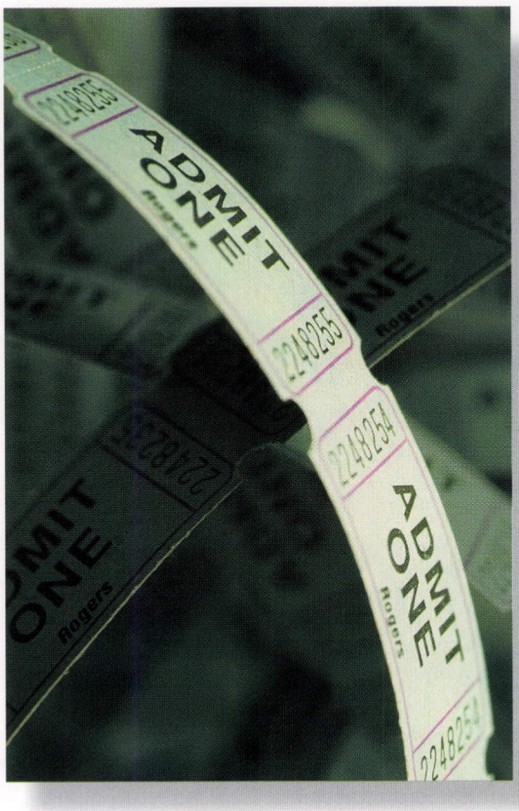
Home Delivery

A Little House Music

The self-proclaimed "Live Music Capital of the World," Austin has scores of clubs and opportunities to hear live music. Nonetheless, a growing phenomenon around town is house concerts, in which people invite musicians to their homes to perform for friends and a very select audience. These small house concerts have attracted some of the top performers in a variety of musical fields—classical, country western,



blues, rock 'n' roll and folk—as well as aspiring musicians who are less well known. Performers include such notable personalities and singer-songwriters as Don Walser, Christine Albert, Ray Wylie Hubbard, Betty Elders and Emily Kaitz.



"I first heard about house concerts in 1984 or so from people touring in communities outside the big cities—rural areas of the Midwest and on the east and west coasts," says folksinger Brian Cutean, who urged his Austin friends to open their homes. "Music is one of the oldest ways that people share. House concerts are a wonderful alternative for all ages, without the drinking and smoking (of nightclubs)."

Intimate, friendly and often smoke-free, house concerts are more comfortable than clubs for performers and audiences alike. "It's a different format, one that appreciates the musician," says Marianne Justman, who plans on inviting friends to concerts at her house in Clarksville from time to time. "The entertainers love it," says Bruce Rouse, who teaches a seminar on the subject at the Kerrville Folk Festival. "There are more and more opening up all over Texas and nationwide."

Audiences at house concerts are serious music fans, numbering anywhere from a few to as many as 75 people. News about concerts generally are circulated by word of mouth, on the Internet or through mailers with a limited distribution. Since space is limited, reservations are required, and many performances are sold out well in advance. Prices range from around $5 to $30 per person and sometimes include dinner or snacks. All of the profits are given to the performers, who may earn more than at a club.

There are only a few established venues in town, although many people are inviting their favorite performers to play in living rooms and back yards. Musicians live at Quicksand Farms, a old stone farmhouse near Manor restored for a Willie Nelson movie, and perform occasionally. They also stage a legendary mid-summer outdoor square dance every year. The Old School on East 11th Street, was the former German/American Ladies College, built in 1872 for well-to-do young ladies studying music and the arts. Impromptu jam sessions held by carpenter-musicians restoring the Victorian mansion have turned into more structured dinner concerts. The most recent site is Hostels International Austin on Lakeshore Boulevard, which hosts weekly Wednesday night sessions for visiting folk musicians. For classical musicians, the Austin Chamber Music Society also sponsors an Intimate Concert Series that has grown by popular demand to 12 performances a year.

House concerts do have their downside. Neighbors in residential areas have been known to grouse about parking, and some people who regularly entertain prefer to remain anonymous to avoid any controversy. "I do it in my home all the time," says one secretive host. "I'm trying to support the local musicians."

Mary Beth Gradziel

Spokes Men

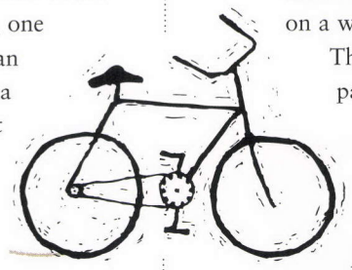
Brakes on Crime

On a 6th Street Friday night, the jammed sidewalks and crowd-packed alleyways mean good times for music lovers and good business for club owners.

For the Austin Police Department, however, coping with large street crowds is more than maintaining traffic signals and contending with the occasional rowdy drunk.

Urban crowds spilling down the strip and squeezing in quaint side streets are big-time obstacles for police trying to reach a trouble spot. Patrol cars can't cut down narrow alleys and—outside of Hollywood cop flicks—jumping curbs in siren-wailing cruisers is a no-no. Even the most agile foot patrolmen often get trapped or lost in the human crush.

The solution? Bicycles. More specifically, Austin police mounted on specially designed mountain bicycles. "Because of the increased mobility, one officer on a bike can cover the same area in ten minutes that takes an officer on foot an hour," says APD Lt. Harold Piatt. "Bicycles also give us more visibility, either when working with a large crowd or even in a daytime patrol situation." Piatt is in charge of APD's "walking patrols," what used to be called cops on a walking beat.



The APD bike patrols started five years ago with a trial program on Sixth Street. According to Piatt, that trial program went very well. "We found we could patrol our areas with fewer officers. And the bikes

were real helpful on Sixth Street on Friday and Saturday nights. If we start having a lot of problems or a disturbance, the bike police can get to the disturbance unbelievably quick." Austin's "bike police" are specially trained to ride in crowds.

Officer Manny Martinez, husky and in his mid-30s, peers reflectively through a pair of metal-rimmed glasses. A 10-year APD vet, he's pulled bicycle duty for three years. "Most of the calls we get on Friday and Saturday nights are alcohol related," Martinez says. His cool eyes ought to be ice enough to sober all but the soggiest of Sixth Street drunks. Bikes are quiet, and Martinez likes the stealth—no sirens to either scare a large crowd or alert a suspect.

Martinez' partner is Officer Jerry Bauzon, 26 years old, trim, taut and muscular. He's been on the force three years. Bauzon likes the bike patrol because "there's more freedom. You're outdoors and not confined to a vehicle, and you get lots of exercise." Bauzon particularly enjoys working 6th Street and the Drag. "On Guadalupe, you work with people, both good and bad. You're in touch with the city, often on a positive basis."

Car patrols can be isolating, Bauzon says, and officers working out of cruisers often end up responding only to radio calls from people in crises or severe difficulties. One negative case after another makes the work turn to grind. Bike-borne, an officer has time to mix with the crowds, shoot the breeze and stop crime by simply being part of the scene. "The visibility of officers on a walking beat, on bikes, takes care of a lot of potential problems," Bauzon says. Which means bike patrols give the police higher visibility, which add up to crime deterrence.

Bike beats vary. Prime two-wheel posts are 6th Street, the downtown alleys and the Drag from Martin Luther King Boulevard to 27th Street. "We'll work the day labor corner in the mornings and parking facilities downtown," says Lt. Piatt. "All of these could have bikes assigned." The bike patrol officers do write parking tickets, and Officer Martinez says when he's on bike patrol he ends up handing a lot of citations to motorcyclists who violate the helmet law.

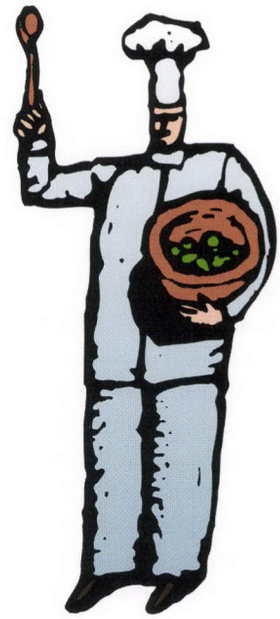
Currently, APD has 32 officers assigned to the "walking beat" and there are four supervisors. "I try to provide a bike to everyone who wants one," Lt. Piatt adds. "At any given time eight to sixteen are on walking beat and maybe five will ride per shift."

Piatt reports that the bicycle operating costs are small and that most of APD's black GT (Gary Turner) mountain bikes have been donated. The mountain bikes carry police stickers on the cross bar and have a special rack for carry bags. The GT bikes cost around $700. Fully equipped police cruisers, Piatt likes to point out, run from $20,000 to $25,000. Officers on bike duty always wear an official police jacket with reflective silver stripes running side to side.

With the growth of downtown businesses and upscale aura of the warehouse district, APD may need to add new walking beats sometime during the next three years. "As that happens," Piatt says, "we'll add more bikes as we add beats." Looks like it could become the Tour de Downtown.

Austin Bay

SHERRY L. GREENBERG



Cultivated Tastes

SWIFT PREMIUM

The herd of deer roaming John and Sidney Jones' ranch in Driftwood is no accident of nature. Behind an eight-foot high fence, the 400-plus animals represent a new cash crop, destined for discriminating diners at some of the best restaurants in Texas.

The Joneses are game farmers, doing their part to supply the growing American appetite for leaner, healthier meats. Raising European fallow deer and a small herd of buffalo, the couple continues a legacy begun thousands of years ago during the time of the Egyptian Pharaohs.

"Deer farming in the United States really began about ten years ago," explains John Jones, owner of J*One*S Ranch Inc. "But most of the animals are raised for breeding and hunting."

Since 1992, however, the North American Deer Farmers Association (NADFA) reports that Americans have increased their consumption of game meats, venison in particular, by some 30 percent each year.

In three years domestic pro-

duction of deer has more than doubled, rising from around 200,000 pounds to nearly 511,000 pounds per year. Supplying that game are small ranchers like the Joneses, who handle all the duties of raising the animals, operating the ranch and running the business.

John and Sidney stumbled into game farming about three years ago. Until then, John worked primarily as a real estate attorney and Sidney dedicated her time to a wide variety of volunteer and community efforts, among them serving as the community liaison to the College of Natural Sciences Advisory Board at the University of Texas. A dinner party changed all that.

"We were at an advisory board dinner," explains Sidney, "and John was seated next to a man who raised axis deer." The cattle on the Jones' ranch weren't bringing in much income, and John was looking for a way to have the ranch pay for itself. "It was time for a change," John says, "so I started looking into fallow deer." The couple attended a seminar several weeks later, and "nothing has been the same since," says Sidney. The Joneses found themselves entrepreneurs in a new field, one they discovered was growing rapidly as Americans were becoming more health conscious.

From a dining standpoint, J*One*S venison bears little resemblance to the tough, gamy venison many people have shunned in the past. "Typically, people hunted deer for the trophy—the antlers—not for the meat," John explains. "A big rack of antlers means an older deer, and that means a tough, strong-tasting meat."

"Farm-raised venison is naturally tender," he says. "The best way to sell our venison is to put it into someone's mouth." J*One*S Ranch supplies venison to local restaurants as well as fine eateries in San Antonio, Fredericksburg, Houston and Fort Worth. With about the same fat and calorie content as a skinless chicken breast, venison has been lauded by the American Heart Association.

J*One*S animals are what could be called free-range deer. They are raised with little intervention. Sidney notes that the less they do to the animals, the better the rate of survival. "Our philosophy is to keep them happy," she says. J*One*S Ranch also is home to 20 buffalo, dozens of yearling deer and a handful of llamas, which guard the deer from predators.

Unlike other game farmers, the Joneses specialize in the sale of fresh, unfrozen meat. The ranch supplies customers primarily with fresh venison, cut to their specifications, which Sidney calls a "Neiman-Marcus approach to the business." J*One*S also prepares pre-formed, ground patties that have to be frozen in order to comply with federal regulations. Local customers include such leading restaurants and retail outlets as Brio Vista, Coyote Cafe, Bertram's, Mezzaluna, Jean-Luc's French Bistro, and Zoot as well as Central Market. "Lots of Austin chefs are doing great things with our meat," John says.

Because U.S. consumers have cultivated a culinary romance with game, the NADFA notes there is plenty of room for more venison farmers. American-farmed meat fills only a small share of consumer demand. New Zealand venison, known in food circles as Cervena, currently dominates the market. Almost 75 percent of the 2.7 million pounds of venison consumed in 1995 was imported from New Zealand, according to NADFA.

"New Zealand farmers are the big guys of the business," says Sidney, who adds that J*One*S will be shipping its meat outside the state in the near future. "We're expecting our sales to grow as more and more Americans learn about the virtues of venison."

Rebecca Chastenet de Géry

Grade Expectations

Sect Education

By reputation, St. James Episcopal Church is one of Central Texas' most dynamic and eclectic churches. Its diverse congregation at 3701 E. Martin Luther King Blvd. in East Austin includes members from the University of Texas faculty, the elite of Austin's Black business community, seminarians from the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest and a spectrum of central and East Austinites. The worship services are Anglican poetics with a gospel thump, "Deep South" combined with "Deep Canterbury."

Two years ago, several parishioners saw a larger opportunity for church involvement in their immediate community. The church sensed a real social challenge that the parishioners believed they could meet. Now St. James is in the long, hard process of creating and funding a private parochial school for East Austin.

"When we looked around our immediate community we found that there were few programs in East Austin that provide parents with real alternatives for educating their children," says Gwen Chance, who is in charge of coordinating the planning process for St. James' school. Flashing a smile of equal parts warmth and dazzle, she adds, "And we are interested in not merely providing a choice but providing an outstanding program for children from diverse religious, ethnic and economic backgrounds."

A St. James member for nine years, Chance works as the state director for the federally sponsored Head Start Early Childhood Education Program. When it comes to addressing the educational needs of children in their critical first years, Chance has had broad experience in both the public and private sectors. "Every community needs both private and public programs," she says. "East Austin needs more private educational programs."

The Rev. Bill Bennett, former provost of Austin's Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest and now rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in south Austin, acknowledges that "one of the things we know we really do well in the Episcopal Church is primary and secondary education. Any time we can bring church resources to bear on educational opportunities in specific communities, then we not only contribute to the life of that community but we are acting out the mission of the church."

St. James' immediate neighborhood has several public elementary schools that have been

identified as "low achieving"—struggling, troubled and educationally inadequate. To help students St. James created an after-school tutoring program in 1993. Many parishioners also are deeply involved—publicly, politically and individually—in improving Austin's public schools.

"We aren't writing off public schools in East Austin," says the Rev. William Miller, St. James' rector. "For us it's not either-or." Miller, 38, has been in charge of St. James for almost six years.

There is a definite interest in creating ethnically based schools in Texas, says Bill Bonderant, coordinator of the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC). Based in San Antonio, TEPSAC is an umbrella group of private-school accrediting organizations. Half of the inquiries Bonderant handles regarding new schools involve the creation of private schools oriented toward minority groups, particularly Chinese, African American and Hispanic.

Bonderant says most people who contact his office tell him the parents want to remove their children from a situation where they cannot compete effectively and put them in a more encouraging environment—one more supportive emotionally and intellectually. "I recommend that they have at least $100,000 for a one-grade school. I'd say have $1 million in the bank if you want grades one to six," he says.

St. James' new endeavor occurs at a time when the number of private schools in the Austin area, particularly private parochial schools, is rapidly increasing. With the surge in population during the 1980s and 1990s, 27 private schools were established in the Austin area, 10 of these since 1990, says Carol Janes Moya of the Austin Private School Referral Service. Almost 60 percent were private parochial schools.

St. James' intends to start with one grade and expand from there. Miller says the church wants to first establish itself solidly in East Austin and then recruit students from all over the city. "Ultimately, we want to have a truly diverse student body that reflects the world we live in," he says.

Starting small isn't unusual for parochial schools. When Hyde Park Baptist School opened its doors in 1968, it had one kindergarten class with 20 students; now it's the largest parochial school in Austin. St. James' first class opened in September with seven students. Spring enrollment was 12. "Our goal is to have classes through the eighth grade," says Winona Miles, another parishioner involved in organizing talent and raising funds for the new school. Miles says St. James ultimately will have between 350 and 400 students. "About the size of St. Andrews," she says. St. Andrews Episcopal School, located in west Austin on West 31st Street, has 393 students enrolled this spring in grades one through eight.

> "WE AREN'T WRITING OFF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN EAST AUSTIN."

Miles is an imposing personality, with high cheek bones like church rafters and a cool voice as clear and precise as her vision of the possible. A member of the state board of pardons and paroles, she says that Texas' prison population is filled with men and women who are educational failures. "I've often questioned myself," she says, "asking what would have happened to them if they had been in a positive education environment, one giving them pride in their ability to do positive things."

Rev. Miller emphasizes that St. James' goal is to give children an opportunity to attend a superior parochial school combined with Christian spiritual values. "You can't do that in public schools," Miller notes. "In a private school we don't have as many restrictions as a public school."

If the academic goals are so high, what about costs? Tough question, but it seems that St. James could price itself out of serving its immediate neighborhood. "We know this won't be cheap," Miller says.

Another parochial school in East Austin, Sacred Heart Catholic School at 5911 Reicher Dr. charges parishioners $225 a month and non-parishioners $285 for its pre-kindergarten class. St. James is charging $375 but expects to provide substantial scholarship support from the church, the Episcopal diocese and other charities. "St. James will have a very high number of our students on scholarship," Miller says.

Raising $100,000 is no easy task, let alone $1 million. Currently, Miles is working with several local foundations, and several Episcopal churches in the Austin area are involved in fundraising for the fledgling school. Individual contributions are coming in from all over the country. As the school grows, St. James plans to appeal to national charities. So now the delightful place in Austin where Deep South meets Deep Canterbury is engaged in the long, hard pursuit of deep and willing pockets.

Austin Bay

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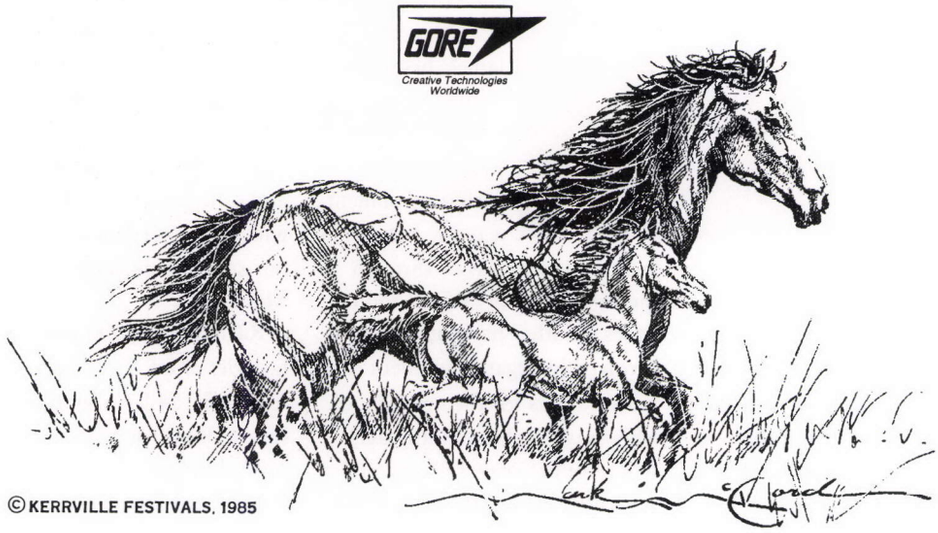

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Lenny Gallant
Vance Gilbert
Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
Paul Glasse
John Gorka
Butch Hancock
Bill & Bonnie Hearne
Sara Hickman
Anne Hills
Jabbering Trout
Jazzabels
Connie Kaldor
Barbara Kessler
Celeste Krenz
Jimmy LaFave
Limpopo
Lowan & Navarro
Abbra Moore
Katy Moffat
Bill Miller
Carrie Newcomer
The Neilds
Ellis Paul
Tom Paxton
Tom Prasado-Rao
Ruben Ramos Texas Revolution
Joel Rafael Band
David Roth
Bill Staines
Steve Seskin
Martin Sexton
Richard Shindell
Darden Smith
Laura Smith
Michael Smith
Chip Taylor
Trout Fishing in America
Cheryl Wheeler
Josh White Jr.
Brooks Williams
Peter Yarrow
and 50 more!

books

By Kathleen Allen-Weber

dog-eared afternoon

Reading on overdrive

At a time when e-mail is replacing letter writing and television passes for interpersonal communication, we hear that people don't have time to read the printed word. We all are hurried. We all are hassled. Every moment counts.

If you are like us here at this magazine, you love to read and have a growing pile of books (as well as magazines and newspapers) to complete ... and choices to make all the time. The reality is, we who enjoy the classics as well as the latest trends no longer have the time to leisurely browse new offerings.

We decided to find out what some of Austin's busiest people are reading. These are people who juggle at least as many things as we do—and often more. They are all pursuing professional careers. Some have spouses and children; all have full lives.

We asked them (1) what was the best book they read in 1996 (irrespective of publication date) and (2) what was their favorite book. No one had difficulty replying. In fact, the most difficult part was narrowing the field to only one or two books. Their choices—surprising, entertaining, revealing and perhaps inspiring—may help you select the next book to read.

Dr. Steven Weinberg, 1979 Nobel Laureate and University of Texas professor in physics and astronomy

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser (One of the favorites of his wife Louise. "She has been after me for years to read it." The description of what the "lower level society was like at the turn of the century [was] very perceptive and very moving.")

FAVORITE BOOK: The collected works of William Shakespeare ("The greatest writer—and perhaps the greatest person—who ever lived. Shakespeare was a cut-above anything else I have ever read." Weinberg singled out *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for what it had to say "about love, theater, power, the uses and misuses of authority.")

Sarah Bird, screenwriter and author of (among other things) *Alamo House*, *The Boyfriend School* and *Virgin of the Rodeo*

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *Paula* by Isabel Allende ("It wasn't about orangutans.")

FAVORITE BOOK: *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez ("The book of the century for our hemisphere. [It has] changed writing as we know it.") and *Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole ("A singular achievement that broke all the rules of writing—the author used dialect and had an unsympathetic character who was a throbbing, hemorrhoidal pain in the beginning, the middle and the end.")

Pat Fuszek, Executive Director, Reading is FUNdamental

BEST BOOK OF 1996: The *Goosebumps* series ("It has children reading who in the past would not have even picked up a book. Any book that can do that gets my vote.")

FAVORITE BOOK: *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brönte (Fuszek, an orphan, loves "to read stories where orphans triumph.")

Mary Willis, award-winning author of *Zero at the Bone*, *The Red Scream* and *Under the Beetle's Cellar*

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *The Liar's Club* by Mary Karr (for "the beauty of the poet's language allied with such wonderful honesty")

FAVORITE BOOK: *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller ("Because it made me laugh out loud ... and there are so few books one can say that about.")

Dr. Margaret Thompson, obstetrician-gynecologist and member of the Renaissance Women's Group and the

Renaissance Women's Center (opening summer '97)

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* by Terry McMillan ("very funny") and *Night* by Elie Wiesel ("I was very moved and grateful to my middle-school-aged son, who read it in his theology class at school and brought it home for me to read.")

FAVORITE BOOK: *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne (Thompson appreciates the allegory, the imagery, "the risk that Hawthorne took in writing it and the strength of character portrayed by the female protagonist.")

Marion Winik, essayist, National Public Radio contributor and author of *Telling* and the award-winning *Love Comes First*

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *The Geography of the Heart* by Fenton Johnson ("[A] gentle book ... well worth the read. [It] was reviewed at the same time as my recent novel, *Love Comes First*, prompting me to pick it up.") and *Never in a Hurry* by San Antonio writer Naomi Shihab Nye ("It will make you fall in love with the world all over again.")

FAVORITE BOOK: *Portnoy's Complaint* by Philip Roth ("It is so outrageous and funny and represents everything I aspire to be as a writer.")

Shannon Sedwick, co-creator and producer of Esther's Follies, now in its 20th year

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *Nothing But Good Times Ahead* by Molly Ivins ("for all the obvious reasons")

FAVORITE BOOK: *Something Wonderful Right Away* by Jeffrey Sweet (This book goes "behind the scenes in the seminal beginnings of improvisational comedy and gave me insight into what comedy works.")

Barbara Lipscomb, attorney and Wild Basin volunteer

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *Possession* by A.S. Byatt ("complicated ... but engaging")

FAVORITE BOOK: Anything written by M.F.K. Fisher, for example, *Long Ago in France* and *Stay Me Oh Comfort Me* (life "beautifully observed in a very detailed way")

Gregory A. Kozmetsky, president, KMS Ventures, Inc.

BEST BOOK OF 1996: He said he mostly reads business-related magazines and books but found *The Chamber* by John Grisham a good story that "holds your attention, keeps you guessing and wondering."

FAVORITE BOOKS: *Flight of the Intruder* by former A-6 pilot, Dean Koontz, and *The Flight of the Old Dog* (a "great flying yarn about a B-52") by former Air Force navigator, Dale Brown. Kozmetsky has read all of Brown's books.

Joia Jitahidi, career counselor, executive coach and president, The Career Catalyst

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *Clicking* by Faith Popcorn (The chapter, "Female Think," is "dedicated to and explains the collaboration and consensus model.")

FAVORITE BOOKS: *The Earth Series* by Sanaya Roman and Duane Packer. Each book is a "complete growth process." ("I have used it over and over myself, and each time it changes my life. Then I start over and read it again.")

Kirk Watson, Austin mayor and former partner with Whitehurst, Harkness, Watson, London, Ozmun & Galow

BEST BOOK OF 1996: *The Good City and the Good Life* by Daniel Kemmis ("Because it provides a good description of how our cities can have a positive impact on the lives of the people who live in them.")

FAVORITE BOOK: *Lincoln at Gettysburg* by Gary Wills ("demonstrates how fundamentally the Gettysburg Address impacts the way we think of our democracy and how we relate to our government")

ASPARAGUS

I froze my ass off all winter,
doing my drag queen thing:
swayed in lacy little fronds,
primped in the frilliest finery,
swaggered in chichi fernery.
But don't think for a minute
that I don't like being a man;
like *The Crying Game*,
I've been hiding surprises.

Already a bold warmth
thrusts through my groins,
and I fill the bed with the
flair of a virulent violet,
a peck of green penes,
long and strong and erect,
a sea of charmed snakes
rising through the air, girl,
not once but all spring long.

—*Scott Wiggerman*

film

By Karl Pallmeyer

a few weeks in another town

On location in Austin

Whether it's the windswept Midwestern plains visited by an angelic John Travolta in *Michael,* the home of the small-town Missouri theater group parodied in *Waiting for Guffman,* or the suburban streets of *SubUrbia,* the Austin area provides a nice little stand in for places seen in some movies now playing at a theater near you.

Since the beginning of this decade, Central Texas and Austin in particular have become a hotbed of filmmaking—from locally produced, low-budget movies like Richard Linklater's *Slacker,* which helped kick off a renaissance of independent filmmaking, to big Hollywood productions like *Courage Under Fire,* the Desert Storm war drama starring Denzel Washington and Meg Ryan.

Austin is on Hollywood's short list. Last year 23 film projects with budgets totaling $97 million were shot all or partially in the Austin area. That includes soon-to-be-released major features like *Home Fries,* which stars Robin Williams and Drew Barrymore, and *The Only Thrill,* featuring Sam Shepard and Diane Keaton. The boom has been in short films and TV movies: Eight independent films, two television miniseries, four made-for-TV movies, a TV pilot and three TV series were produced here. That's a step up from 1995, in which Austin hosted 21 projects with a budget of $55.9 million, and a big jump from the 14 projects and $46.7 million budget in 1994.

Why is Tinseltown bringing its road shows to Austin?

Location is a key element in movie making as in real estate. The Austin area has an abundance of interesting locations, generally good weather, atmosphere conducive to movie making and a pool of experienced technicians and craftspeople.

Downtown Austin offers tall buildings and busy streets while the city's neighborhoods feature the type of suburban settings that could double for Anywhere, U.S.A. It's a short drive from Austin to picturesque rolling hills, murky lakes, barren fields, lush forests, scenic rivers, wide-open plains and other locations filmmakers need. As a result, the city has been home to westerns, horror movies, murder mysteries, comedies, Depression-era dramas and musicals.

"The diversity of this area always works out well for somebody who walks in here," says Tom Copeland, director of the Texas Film Commission, the state agency that helps lure film projects to Texas. "If you're looking for a base to work out of and need more than one place, you can do that right here."

The area has other charms that draw movie makers. They tend to find the climate—both social and weatherwise—attractive. Austin is known for being creative and laid back.

"There's a great entrepreneurial spirit in Austin," says local producer-director Dwight Adair, who relocated from Hollywood five years ago. "This is the kind of place where you have a bunch of people who like to go to four-star restaurants in their sweat suits. There's kind of a Southern California attitude here."

The Austin area offers a lot to do when not on the set. While filming *A Perfect World,* stars Clint Eastwood and Kevin Costner were taking in the jazz scene at the Elephant Room or on the links at one of the area's golf courses. Current silver-screen heartthrob Brad Pitt bought a house here last year.

"Austin has got that sparkle about it right now and people have heard about it," Copeland says. "There's the music scene, there's the quality of life, there's some interesting things to do here, and that makes a difference."

During the silent era, several movie studios set up shop briefly in Texas, including one run by Gaston Méliès, brother of French film pioneer Georges Méliès. *Wings,* the first film to win the Best Picture Oscar, was shot in Texas, but aside from *Giant, The Alamo* and a handful of westerns, the Los Angeles–based studios preferred California.

GRAPHIC BY DAVID TIMMONS

TRUE GRIT

By Carolyn Banks

"You're just what we're looking for," said Melinda, from Third Coast Casting in Austin.

Yeah, I thought. *Fat*. It was having to fill in my measurements on the application form that finally got me, not just dieting, but taking grueling aerobic classes, too.

Now I was being offered a job as an extra in the CBS Hallmark Hall of Fame miniseries, *True Women*. Based on Janice Woods Windle's bestseller of the same name, *True Women* stars Emmy Award–winning *China Beach* actress Dana Delany. The film is scheduled to air on network television in May.

"You'll work four days minimum," Melinda said, "maybe eight days tops. You'll have to be on the set until the shot is done. Maybe ten hours or more a day. Is that OK?"

Heck, yeah. I'd applied to be part of the movie because they'd advertised that they needed women who could ride horses. It was a chance to use a skill I'd gained at great expense over more years than I wanted to count.

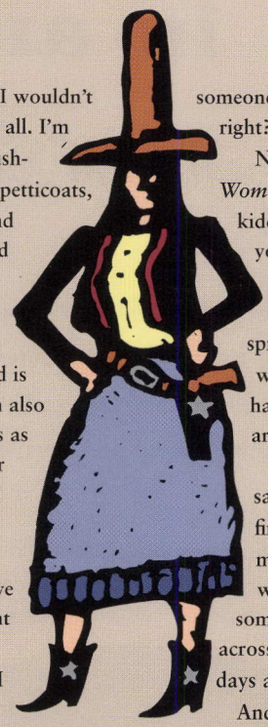
"And we'll pay you $55 a day," Melinda added.

My husband and I had just planned an October trip, so I held by breath while Melinda recited the dates I'd be needed. Whew! I would just be able to squeeze it in. And, yes, I could come to wardrobe right away.

I was being outfitted to play a frontier woman in a historical incident known as "The Runaway Scrape," a terrified exodus of Texas women who had been left behind by their men—fathers, husbands, sons and brothers who'd gone off to fight the evil Santa Ana during the Texas Revolution in 1936.

Now I feared that the two weeks of aerobics I'd endured had whittled me down way too far to be right for the part. Never mind that I couldn't see any difference in the way my bluejeans fit me.

But my experience at wardrobe made me suspect that I wouldn't be riding a horse after all. I'm outfitted in a bone-crushing corset and several petticoats, thick lisle stockings and donut-size garters. And this is just the undies!



A skirt and shirt and bonnet and apron goes on top of this and is that all? Heck, no. I'm also given a coat that looks as though it had a former life as a saddled pad. I think if I'd seen the photo that wardrobe snapped of me, I'd have backed out of this right then and there.

But forget the way I looked. When I had to actually wear that stuff, how I looked didn't seem to matter any more. To me, anyway. The question became, could I survive in garments that outweigh an anvil?

Look, I knew I was a whiner going into this. Now I was learning that I am a *major* whiner. I'm talking world class here. There were some 70 other corseted extras, all whining like crazy, and I was able to top them all. I mean, halfway through shooting the first scene on the first day, I found myself wondering out loud if the production company could just script my demise and let me outa here.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me tell you first about the whole business of getting into my authentic period costume when the first day of shooting actually arrived.

It is done in a tiny trailer while half the other extras—that's 35 women—are in there doing the exact same thing. Think Loehmann's dressing room when a sale is in progress, only without air conditioning. Elbows poke, brassieres fly, stays gouge and safety pins prick.

Following which you stagger over to makeup. I know, you're thinking of something glamorous, like, I'll be preening in a stylist's chair while someone primps and coifs me, right?

Not so. Makeup for *True Women* consists of dirt. I'm not kidding. You hold the palm of your hand out while the makeup person shakes dirt into it. Then she sprays water on it and watches while you rub your hands together to smear it around.

Not good enough, she says, making you rake your fingernails across your muddy palm so that you will actually look like someone who's been fleeing across a prairie for days and days and days.

And even when the grit is wedged way down under your nails, you aren't done. You have to do your face and neck and arms, too.

Then somebody dusts down your garment with dirt and rubs it in. You stand there knowing that somewhere, in a faraway city, your mother, who was always after you to stay clean, is feeling a vague ache in her heart.

You take up your assigned position, usually next to a team of mules who seem to have been fed an awful lot of beans in the past 24 hours. The mules eye you with hostility. They seem to think you smell worse than they do.

By now you know a few of your fellow extras and, between takes, you get to whine in friendly little groups instead of alone. From group-whining I learn that almost every woman who applied did so because she'd hoped to ride a horse. And I figure it out: Third Coast wanted riders because they figured we were used to being dirty, used to trudging through horse plops and cow patties. We had all hoped to ride and here we are, stuck instead inside 20 pounds of clothes!

Which prompts the second most popular topic: How will ever we go to the bathroom dressed like this? Has anybody tried?

This problem is quickly solved. You cannot find the bathroom.

See, everything changes in the film biz. The port-a-potties that were ten yards away five minutes ago may be miles away next time you look for them, hauled to the next location by one of the scores of industrious people who are bustling about with their walkie-talkies, dressed in civilian clothes. I'm not kidding.

There are 144 people on this set, extras, cast and crew. I didn't have to ask anybody about the number because, while I was stuffing my coat pockets with pretzels, the caterer told me. "Hey," she muttered. "Stop that. Those are supposed to feed 144 people, not just you." We had arrived at 11:30 a.m., and I hadn't eaten breakfast because Third Coast had mentioned we'd be served lunch.

I hadn't realized that lunch is routinely eaten long after dark.

Oh, but on that very first day, somewhere along the line, all of our grumbling stopped. We got into it, in fact. When the AD—that's assistant director to you—yelled "Background," which meant us, we scrambled to our feet, soiled petticoats flying, into our positions. We were tired and hungry and dirty, sure, but we'd started liking it.

So much so that when the Texas Rangers rode up the hill to be reunited with us on the third day of our filming stint, my eyes started to tear up. There the men were, bloody but unbowed, coated in the honey-colored light of the setting sun. I mean, I wasn't even remotely thinking about food, which is very unusual for me.

I looked around at the others and their eyes were tearing up, too. And suddenly I knew what had happened: We had stopped being extras, that was what, and started being, well, yes, *true women*.

Carolyn Banks is a writer of suspense novels, comic mysteries, short stories, personal essays and book reviews.

"AUSTIN HAS GOT THAT SPARKLE ABOUT IT RIGHT NOW...PEOPLE HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT,"
—TOM COPELAND, TEXAS FILM COMMISSION

That began to change in the '60s when more films went on location throughout the United States. In the '80s *Tender Mercies* made a star out of the tiny Dallas-area town of Waxahachie. Dallas, besides being home to the popular TV show that bore its name, also took a lion's share of films, including *RoboCop* and a trio of Oliver Stone movies: *Talk Radio, Born on the Fourth of July* and *JFK*.

The Oscar-winning *Terms of Endearment* was made in Houston, which also was featured in *Local Hero* and *The Man Who Loved Women*. German director Wim Wenders put *Paris, Texas* on the map. Austin picked up its share of productions with three Willie Nelson movies—*Honeysuckle Rose, Songwriter* and *Redheaded Stranger*—which used mostly Texas crews.

Linklater's *Slacker* and *Dazed and Confused* boosted the image of Austin as a haven for small, independent productions. Just about any week you'll find a crew of University of Texas film students—or dropouts—lugging camera gear around the Drag. Today, Austin seems full of guerrilla filmmakers willing to put up their lifesavings and borrow what they can to produce their personal 16mm epics, which they hope will find an audience through one of the hundreds of film festivals staged each year around the country. (Austin, by the way, hosts three nationally respected film fests.) In addition to Linklater, the patron saint of this movement is Robert Rodriguez, who catapulted to stardom when his micro-budget *El Mariachi* won top honors at the Sundance Film Festival. While *El Mariachi* was produced for $7,000, Rodriguez got $7 million and international star Antonio Banderas for his second film, *Desperado*.

Despite mainstream success, Linklater, Rodriguez and *Beavis and Butt-head* creator Mike Judge still call Austin home. Others have returned because they can pursue their dreams without having to live in California or New York.

Adair returned to Austin for the freedom he didn't have working as a hired gun for the studio system. He had achieved a modicum of success directing several episodes of TV's *Dallas* and *Dynasty* in California and had been dialog coach on *Urban Cowboy* and *A River Runs Through It*.

"Personally, I found my creativity was crushed by the atmosphere out in California," Adair says. "I found myself becoming less and less productive."

Adair now runs Granite House, a production company that makes commercials and corporate training videos, which he hopes will finance a handful of independent feature films.

"I could see where I could make my mark here in a smaller pond as opposed to the large pond out in L.A.," Adair says. "Twenty years ago, I couldn't make a living in Austin. When I moved back here five years ago, it was possible to make a living."

He also says Central Texas is home to many seasoned professionals in the filmmaking industry: There is a local supply of cinematographers, film editors, gaffers, set designers, electricians and other craftspeople to staff up to five productions at once. The lower cost of living and the fact that Texas is a right-to-work state also mean that movies cost less to make here than in union-staffed counterparts in California. That's important to budget-conscious movie makers.

While the big films, with a staff of 150 to 200 people, mean higher budgets, they translate into fewer jobs for locals because more people are brought in from California. The short films and TV movies, with smaller crews and lower budgets, hire about 70 percent of the crew locally. Copeland says that means big business for the Texas film industry.

"[The budget] just dictates that they have to hire more people from here," Copeland says. "So our people get the better jobs, they get a better credit and, hopefully one of these days, they move up."

Every day there's a good number of people who wake up in the mornings and go to work in the film industry around Central Texas. While it's not time to change the lyrics from "Hooray for Hollywood" to "Hooray for Austin," the River City is making its mark.

A FEW GREAT REASONS TO VISIT THE SHORELINE GRILL

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music

By Glen Alyn

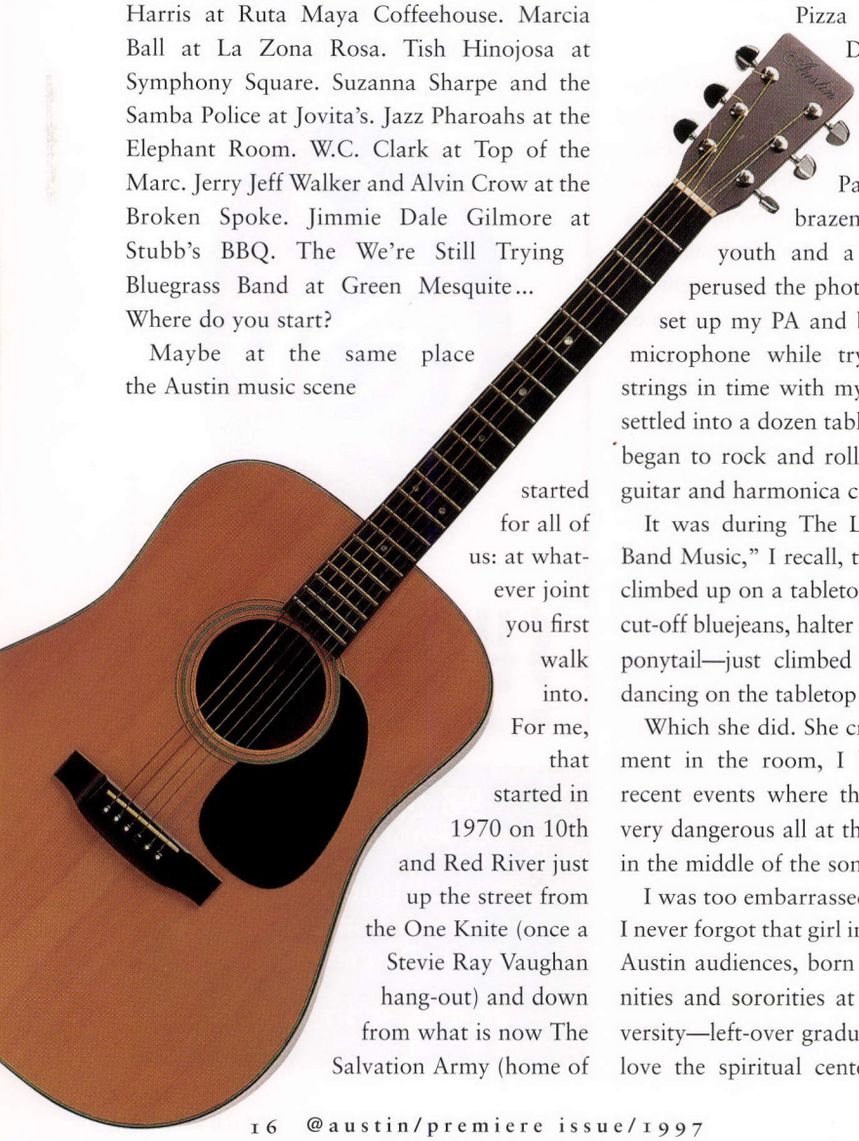
the play's the thing

Enjoying the show is a two-way street

So, you've just moved to Austin. Your lawn mower is missing along with your prized collection of silver dollars. Your next-best china is in pieces—shards for some archaeologist carefully sifting a landfill a couple hundred years from now. Since the TV screen is shattered inside the crushproof box, what'll it take to get your mind off it? You can't mow the lawn. A movie? Theater? A poetry reading? Or what about this "Austin: Live Music Capital of the World" soundbite you've been hearing about?

Let's see. There's the Impotent Sea Snakes and 24 other bands of note down on 6th Street. The Asylum Street Spankers at the Electric Lounge. Sue Foley at Antone's. Lamar Harris at Ruta Maya Coffeehouse. Marcia Ball at La Zona Rosa. Tish Hinojosa at Symphony Square. Suzanna Sharpe and the Samba Police at Jovita's. Jazz Pharoahs at the Elephant Room. W.C. Clark at Top of the Marc. Jerry Jeff Walker and Alvin Crow at the Broken Spoke. Jimmie Dale Gilmore at Stubb's BBQ. The We're Still Trying Bluegrass Band at Green Mesquite... Where do you start?

Maybe at the same place the Austin music scene started for all of us: at whatever joint you first walk into. For me, that started in 1970 on 10th and Red River just up the street from the One Knite (once a Stevie Ray Vaughan hang-out) and down from what is now The Salvation Army (home of many past, present and future musicians).



I rolled into town about four months away from Vietnam—PA, guitar and long hair in tow—and landed two gigs: the Village Inn Pizza Parlor on 29th and Duval (now Double Dave's Pizza) and the Night Train Restaurant & Ice Cream Parlor. Armed with the brazen, unstable courage of youth and a sprinkle of talent, I perused the photos at the Night Train, set up my PA and began to sing into the microphone while trying to strum guitar strings in time with my music. The audience settled into a dozen tables or so, and the place began to rock and roll as far as an acoustic guitar and harmonica could take it.

It was during The Lovin' Spoonful's "Jug Band Music," I recall, that this one lovely girl climbed up on a tabletop with her skinny legs, cut-off bluejeans, halter top and flopping hippy ponytail—just climbed up there and started dancing on the tabletop to beat the band!

Which she did. She created so much excitement in the room, I began to recall some recent events where things got exciting and very dangerous all at the same time. So I quit in the middle of the song and took a break.

I was too embarrassed to ask her name, but I never forgot that girl in the halter top. Or the Austin audiences, born from a rash of fraternities and sororities at a "party down" university—left-over graduates who had come to love the spiritual center of Texas so much they'd work for peanuts not to leave it. They were tempered with a bi-annual injection of politicians mixing with rednecks on Lamar and African Americans in East Austin before the interstate cut the city in half physically as well as racially.

These folks in Austin had a way of judging for themselves what they liked and didn't like and showing their appreciation or disapproval with audacious enthusiasm. They didn't need to see someone three times on MTV, hear them on weekly rotation on KGSR-FM, read about them for a year in the paper and wait for their name to show up in *Rolling Stone* before they decided some musician was good enough for them. They just went and listened and liked or didn't like what they heard, strictly on the terms of what they were eating and listening and getting drunk to.

That interaction of unpretentious audiences with live musicians is what created the Austin music scene. As long as both are alive and well, there will continue to be a healthy live-music stew in Austin. It might move from blues to rock 'n' roll to country to folk to surf to disco to reggae to punk to grunge to salsa to jazz to world music and back and forth. One may wonder how a set of grubby musicians with a second-hand public address system can compete in these times of $70 million hype campaigns, where you're served up and spoon-fed musicians and nothing more is required of you other than watching the silver screen or boob tube. If you've ever experienced the interaction of a real-live audience with real-live musicians, perhaps you felt less like a recipient and more like a player. You can feel something come over you that makes you know you're fully dimensional and alive. It's called "beyond virtual reality."

The Austin music scene rolls around from one part of town to another. It sways with the trends of its audiences. It provides a home for a time for innovators like Janis Joplin, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Lucinda Williams who go

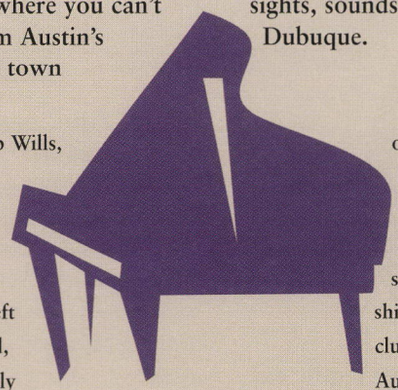
By Steve Brooks

GREAT PERFORMANCES

Talk about too much of a good thing. In a town where every third person seems to play guitar, there are upward of 150 clubs offering live music on any given weekend. You can choose among country, folk, jazz, Tejano, blues, world beat and every flavor of rock from rockabilly to death metal. The intimidating problem that faces every newcomer is: Where do you start?

Here, to simplify your choices, are ten places where you can't go wrong. It would be presumptuous to call them Austin's ten "best." On any given night, the best show in town could just as easily be at a 1,000-seat hall or a hideaway hole-in-the-wall—or even at the venerable rock club named Hole in the Wall.

We picked these ten partly because they're places you can count on hearing great music, whatever the night. But music's only half the clubgoing experience. Each of these rooms also offers a heaping helping of pure Austin vibe—that harmonic convergence of sights, sounds and personalities that tell you you're not in Dubuque.



1. If there's one musical event that comes closest to summing up Austin, it's the supper sessions at Threadgill's (6416 N. Lamar). For one thing, no other venue has such a pedigree. The original restaurant was a meeting place for hippies and rednecks and the site where Janis Joplin played her first gigs. Abandoned after Threadgill's death, it was bought by Eddie Wilson, onetime partner in the legendary Armadillo World Headquarters, when the city threatened to tear it down. Though it's been rebuilt, you'll swear you've just stepped into a vintage '50s diner.

Every Wednesday night, from 6:30 to 9:30, the Threadgill Troubadours host a mixture of established stars and up-and-comers that's full of spontaneity, surprise and chicken-fried steak. It's a place to sample a cross-section of local talent and sense the special rapport that springs up between Austin musicians and crowds. Plan to arrive no later than 6 p.m. if you want a seat to sit and eat.

2. If country music's your thang, polish your boots and point your pickup toward The Broken Spoke (3201 S. Lamar). It lives up to its billing as "Last of the True Texas Dance Halls," with a floor that's always packed and bands that can tell a Schottische from a Cotton-Eye Joe. Sure, Willie played there, as did Bob Wills, Jerry Jeff and anyone who's been anyone in Texas twang. Many of them left their hats behind, which are proudly on display in the room to the left.

3. Austin used to be short on jazz, but lately a strong scene has developed west of Congress. No place does it better than Cedar Street (204 W. 4th). On a summer's night, the patio and outdoor stage are jammed with well-dressed patrons nursing an after-dinner or post-theater drink.

4. If jazz is too cheerful, maybe you need a shot of the blues. Not too far away you'll find a classically dark and smoky room called Antone's (213 W. 5th). Back in the '70s, the house band was fronted by the late Stevie Ray Vaughan. Today, it maintains its reputation as the best blues club south of Chicago, with frequent visits from masters like Buddy Guy and Bobby Blue Bland. The blues burn hottest in August, when owner Clifford Antone throws a two-week birthday bash.

5. Rock clubs come in all shapes and sizes, but two stand out. The Continental Club (1315 S. Congress) is the place for old-time rock 'n' roll. It's the kind of small room that makes you strip to your T-shirt in a hurry. The club sponsors one of Austin's longest-running weekly gigs: the Tuesday "hippie hour" with Toni Price.

6. College rock cranks up at Liberty Lunch (405 W. 2nd), a cavernous space that resembles a roofed-over parking lot. The crowd's young, the drinks are cheap and it's a good bet to hear underground bands that will be all over the radio six months from now.

7. Austin's no slouch when it comes to national touring acts. The biggest names hit the Austin Music Hall (208 Nueces), a renovated warehouse that hosts the likes of Bob Dylan. Unlike most Austin clubs, it usually has ample seating, if you don't mind folding chairs.

8. The same owners run an even better spot to sit: The Backyard (13101 Texas Hwy. 71 West) in Bee Cave. It's an outdoor amphitheater where you can spread out a blanket under the stars and hear everyone from Crosby, Stills & Nash to Ray Charles.

9. At the other extreme of square-footage is the Cactus Cafe (24th and Guadalupe). Tucked away inside the Texas Union at UT, it's an intimate place to hear folk balladry, the kind of singer-songwriter music that first put Austin on the map. It's that rare music room where people come to listen rather than talk, and you can't beat the $2 pints of Shiner Bock, the popular dusky brew.

10. Last, but certainly not least, is East 6th Street. By day, it's just a thoroughfare, but at night the strip between Brazos and Red River becomes essentially one long club with a variety of listening rooms.

Our favorite way to do 6th Street is to make a night of it. Park in a paid lot, unless you want to walk six blocks to get there. Promenade and poke your head in as many front doors as you like, until you hear something that interests you. On Saturday night, when it turns into a pedestrian mall, the shows outside the clubs may be more interesting than the ones inside. That's when you discover the real secret of the music scene—that so long as you're in Austin, all the world's a stage.

Steve Brooks is a journalist by day and guitarslinger by night.

by Debra Carter

FEEDBACK

A QUICK LOOK AT WHO'S LISTENING TO WHAT

Singer-songwriter Kris McKay:

- Me'shell Ndegeocello, "Peace Beyond Passion" ("This woman rocks my world. Her first record was great, too.")

Artist and art critic Madeline Irvine:

- Johnny Cash, "American Recordings" ("My musical tastes are fairly eclectic. This is one of those classic albums ... I never tire of.")
- Van Morrison, "How Long Has This Been Going On"
- Iris Dement, "Infamous Angel" ("This is not a new CD, but I still play it all the time.")
- Chopin conducted by Vladimir Horowitz

KLBJ radio personality Bob Fonseca:

"I've been listening to some local stuff that I've been recording from live performances. I'm really liking Reckless Kelly, the Holy Moellers, and I just got the new advance copy of Steamrollers, and that's pretty good."

Texas Fine Arts Association consultant Molly Hipp:

- Carl Perkins, "Go, Cat, Go" ("I'm such a sucker for '50s' rockabilly.")
- "The Tango Project" ("I play the song 'Por Una Cabeza' over and over again. You can feel the intensity of emotion between lovers with every beat.")
- Van Morrison "The Healing Game" ("This guy is the ultimate Welsh poet.")

Author and UT English professor John Rumrich:

- Crowded House, "Together Alone" ("This album was recorded in solitude in a house on the far side of New Zealand. The Maori musicians playing on some of these songs are wonderful. Listening to this CD takes be back to New Zealand.")
- Dave Mathews Band, "Crash" ("I really like this CD.")
- Ella Fitzgerald and Louie Armstrong, "Ella and Louie" ("I listen to Ella Fitzgerald a lot, and this recording is my favorite.")

on to mesmerize national and global audiences. It hangs with the students and drifts from Red River to downtown, Lamar to Congress, Ben White to The Victory Grill, Hyde Park to Bee Cave.

It started for me on Red River and in the University area with such elders of Austin music as Mance Lipscomb, Robert Shaw, Bill Neely, Ken Threadgill and Grey Ghost. The original Saxon Pub on 38th and I-35—where I saw Willie Nelson reach around Ray Wylie Hubbard's back and play his guitar—is now a Chinese restaurant. The Checkered Flag and Castle Creek—once near 15th and Lavaca—is now a roofless parking lot with brick walls. The Capital Oyster Bar next door metamorphosed into Pearl's Oyster Bar, home for blues and jazz. The One Knite settled into an antique store on Waller Creek and has been resurrected as Stubb's BBQ. The Vulcan Gas company spawned the Armadillo World Headquarters and what is now Vulcan Video at the end of the Drag. Jim Franklin moved the Armadillo into the Ritz on 6th Street while Eddie Wilson moved it into Threadgill's gas station and back to the Riverside area, where it orignally blossomed by Bouldin Creek under the roof of the old National Guard Armory. The Hungry Horse Saloon corraled Greezy Wheels, Austin's first country-rock fusion band, and then put itself out to pasture while Cleave Hattersley and Mary Egan took Austin to New York City in the guise of the Lone Star Cafe. Antone's started out on 6th street, moved around like a homeless person dodging rent, and settled downtown again on 5th Street while 6th Street has become Austin's version of Chicago's Old Town and St. Louis' Gaslight Square—the hyped-up home and circus for the cradle of Austin music.

In my time, the arena has gone full circle. Austin music comes and goes like mushrooms in cow paddies. Sometimes it plops down in the same place, sometimes it migrates, but the clubs remain in the same pasture called Austin. It's a seasoned field made of a blending of cultures and tastes, fertile ground for who knows what will sprout up next.

The clubs, promoters and media may know how to service that scene—they do play a big part in extending its life span and turning the emotion to profit—but the hype doesn't create the scene. You do. The audience. And the musicians who choose to play to you. So, *you* choose. Then make up your own reality in the Austin music scene.

Glen Alyn is a writer, poet, musician and award-winning author of I Say Me for a Parable.

By Ann McCutchan

close encounters

Canoeing on the Colorado

If you think Town Lake is the only place around Austin to go canoeing, consider the pleasures of the Colorado River Trail beyond the city. Several access points close to town and two area canoe services make rural trips convenient. The curvaceous Colorado also offers a high ratio of river distance to road. In this part of Texas, 20 miles of quiet water equals about 10 miles of asphalt road, which means you can shuttle back to your put-in point relatively quickly.

As an avid weekend canoeist, I can recommend two sections of the Colorado southeast of Austin that are safe and easy—good, year-round choices for beginning paddlers and families with teen-agers. They take five to six hours each, depending on water flow and the number of stops you make.

The first section is a 16-mile stretch from Webberville's main community park just off FM 969 to the bridge take-out at Utley (also on 969). This comfortable outing begins and ends in farmland. (Note: Driving east from Austin on FM 969, Webberville Park is the second of two marked parks in the little town. The first one, a county park, contains a small boat launch; Webberville Park, three miles farther, is a large, underused public park with plenty of parking and picnic tables.) The second section, a 14-mile segment from the Utley bridge on FM 969 to Fisherman's Park in Bastrop rewards canoeists with the amenities of a town at journey's end.

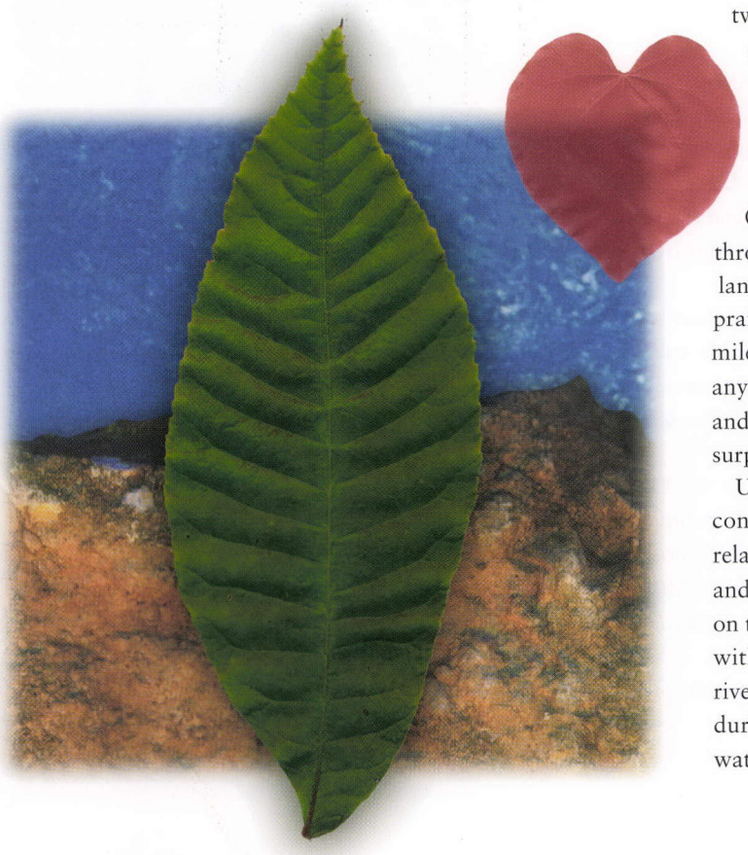


ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID TIMMONS

No matter which of the two sections you paddle, you'll encounter large, wildflower-filled islands perfect for rest stops.

This part of the Colorado winds through beautiful forest land, red stone cliffs and prairie. You can float for miles without hearing anything but bird song and the groans of a few surprised cows.

Under normal weather conditions the flow is relaxed, with a few shoals and sand bars, depending on the water level. Higher with spring rains, the river level stays constant during the summer as water is released from the Highland Lakes for thirsty crops downstream. White water is rare with flows around 2,000–3,000 cubic feet per second.

If you have your own canoe, you can manage either of these trips without outside assistance, as long as there are at least two people and you have two cars. You'll leave one car at the access point where the trip ends so you can shuttle yourselves back to where you started. Webberville Park, the Utley bridge and Fisherman's Park are generally safe places to leave vehicles during the day, but be sure to lock up.

If you need to rent a canoe or want to hire a livery service, there are two outfitters that serve this part of the Colorado. Austin Canoe and Kayak (719-4386, closed Tuesdays) rents canoes for $25 a day (plus tax) including paddles, lifejackets and a roof rack. They do not offer a livery service at this time. The River Shop, on the water just below Fisherman's Park in Bastrop (303-2986), rents canoes at the rates of $10 for one hour, $20 for four hours and $25 for a full day, including paddles and life jackets. Their livery service (to either the put-in or take-out point) costs $10 per trip within 15 road miles of Bastrop, $17.50 for longer distances. Up to six canoes (yours or theirs) can be shuttled per trip. The River Shop also promotes a half-day outing beginning at the shop and ending seven miles downriver on the outskirts of Bastrop. For $30 you get a canoe for four hours, plus pick up.

Whichever trip you choose, be sure to wear a hat and take a bottle of sunscreen—along some stretches of the Colorado, shade is practically non-existent in the middle of the day. Life jackets, one per person, are required by law. Also, lay in an ample supply of food and water—there are no supplies along this part of the river, which flows entirely through private land.

Overnight camping areas (tent spots, not cabins) are available at the Webberville and

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Bastrop parks, and several islands along the route provide good, wild campsites (camping on riverbanks requires permission from the landowner). The Utley-Bastrop leg has an especially large island near the half-way point, a good spot for bird-watching during the day and listening to coyotes at night. Bastrop and Buescher State Parks between Bastrop and Smithville are possibilities for camping—512/321-5101 and 512/237-2241, respectively—although they aren't on the river. If you camp, remember to pack out all trash. Betty Walls, author of the canoeing section of *Outdoors Austin: A Sierra Club Guide*, reminds readers that the Colorado River's beauty was only recently ensured.

"The river was used as a dumping ground for sewage disposal in Austin," she writes, "until 1984 when the Sierra Club and other organizations sued the city, forcing a clean-up of sewage operations. By 1990 the river had regained most of its clarity and beauty."

I would add that the clean-up is ongoing. At least one volunteer group I know of makes an annual canoe trip from Utley to Bastrop, hauling out discarded tires and freeing those ubiquitous plastic shopping bags from tree limbs.

The Lower Colorado River Authority provides public information in several forms. For a recorded report on river conditions, call 473-3333. To speak to a knowledgeable river canoeist, call 473-4083.

For a detailed map of the Colorado River from Austin to Bay City, including river miles, public access points and canoeing tips, mail $5 to LCRA, P.O. Box 220, Austin, TX 78767-0220, attention: Parks Dept. H330.

Ann McCutchan writes about the back roads and rivers of Texas.

LONG BEFORE I GREW SO OLD AND MUDDY

Long before I grew so old and muddy
and became this hunger figure of myself,
Before I managed this stage, this corner,
And became a fixture of this corner,
A motion fixture with his given rage,

Moments before this time we call too late,
Back when I was formed a package of new flesh
In momma's roundness born
Howl crying at life's fear smack,
Back then before the age and mud I was
Fresh clay and rough hope
so clean and washed by rays of mother love,
Those rays of madness.

Such madness, burning years
Before I became a figure of myself.
Hot I fed upon those rays and washed
Made new moment by moment,
By day and night, bathed and scrubbed
In gleaming could be's of my body,
What should be for the flesh figure
Over time through time what should become.

I am talking years, dear lady,
All the what took so long to get to now,
To the old muddy man
Who isn't a reflection of anything
Nor the focal point of something
Other than the very occasional nod,
Which is supposed to be enough when you are older.

But let us see.
You were getting somewhere
Before you turned the corner
Of desire,
Or did I hear you say
"It's better off to sit among nuns and pigeons?"

Dear lady,
Forgive my rags and rage.
I would touch you
Somewhere
Upon your belly,
Mark your hunger figure with the old mud,
One new time
To wash a child
with potent love.

—T. Maria Alvarez

sports

By Nancy Bode Bussey

clay feat

Fired up over sporting clays

"It's cool," says David Schade, an Austin dentist. "They bounce along the ground like a rabbit, explode out of the brush like ducks and rise at a low angle like flushing quail," he says with the excitement of an avid sportsman. Schade is one of a growing legion of sporting clay enthusiasts. Pitting shotgun expertise against clay "birds" is the new sports surprise of the 1990s, attracting fans from Norman Schwarzkopf to Barbara and Louise Mandrell. Well over 600,000 "shooters" in the United States are serious hot shots, competing in at least 20 rounds of "clays" a year.

Part of the allure: A round of sporting clays is like real hunting but bloodless. It appeals to hunters and environmentalists as well as women. Moreover, the guns are the real thing, attracting traditional wingshooters who want to keep in practice but also Generation X-ers who are tired of virtual reality and want to taste the real thing. When the shooting party is a trio or better, sporting clays is a social affair comparable to golf.

Sporting clays came to the United States in 1981, crossing the Atlantic from England, and the first club was established in Dallas. The sport evolved from trap shooting and skeet—a Scandinavian word for "shoot." Trap shooting, begun in the 1830s, first used live pigeons as moving targets, but the sport became more popular when the pigeons were replaced by clay targets. In the 1920s, a derivation of trap shooting—skeet—was devised to mimic hunting: The shooter moved across a field firing at clay targets thrown from a series of stations. Sporting clays made the course more challenging with a variety of terrain, the element of surprise and a number of targets: A short walk from one point to another may afford an experience akin to shooting at ducks, flushing pheasants or pursuing rabbits breaking from cover.

As the sport caught on, membership in the National Sporting Clays Association, headquartered in San Antonio, exploded from 3,252 in 1990 to 13,346 in 1995; nationwide, the number of clubs mushroomed from 194 to 603 during the same time. There are dozens of local, state and national competitions as well as charity fund-raising tournaments that attract such celebrities as Robert Stack, Luke Perry, Brad Johnson and Laura McKenzie. There is even an international competition, the World English Sporting Clays Championship, that rotates between England and the United States.

Austin has embraced the sport and boasts an excellent course: the non-profit Capitol City Trap and Skeet Club (272-4707), which is located off U.S. Highway 290 East near Lake Long. Reservations are usually not required at this no-frills club, which is located minutes from downtown on 40 acres of rolling countryside. The Cypress Valley Preserve (817/793-3341), north off U.S. Highway 183 near Liberty Hill, offers sporting clays, 5-stand and bird hunting during the season. A private club, the initial membership fee is $2,500 with annual dues of $1,000. A round (50 "birds" of varying sizes) at Capitol City is $12.50 for members, $18 for non-members, $22.50 at Cypress Valley. Shooters at both clubs bring their own guns, protective eyewear and ear plugs. Capitol City sells ear plugs for $1 a pair.

Sporting clays appeals to hunters because it resembles hunting and to non-hunters for the mental acuity and skill it demands. Unlike hunting, which is seasonal, sporting clay courses are open year-round, and no license is required. Use of the courses picks up in late summer and early fall as hunters hone their skills. Some enthusiasts manage to take in a round over their lunch hour.

"It's a more aggressive type of shooting that offers variety," explains Al Desjardin, manager for Capitol City, about the sport's appeal. "It's fun."

Ray Bronk contributed to this article.

TONY ROMANO

style

By Pat Barbee

the haute stuff

Redesigning woman

If Paula Lundgren says she's closeted with a client, she is. The Austin-based personal shopper spends time in the closets of some of the best-dressed people in town, weeding out last season's past imperfects, composing a shopping list of new necessities and making sure the line-up of Lundgren-approved purchases are hanging neatly on clear plastic dress hangers—one of her tools of trade.

CHARLA WOOD

It's a rigorous exercise the former retailer has performed on her own closet for years, and one that is in demand. For the past seven years, Lundgren has shopped for and refined the wardrobes of a 500-plus client roster that reads like a who's who of the city's socialites, executives (both men and women), and spouses. She has advised such smartly dressed folks as Elizabeth Christian, wife of Mayor Bruce Todd; Julie Crenshaw, wife of golf pro Ben Crenshaw; and Janice Gatlin, wife of Larry Gatlin plus a legion of attorneys, doctors and other busy as well as notable West Austinites. Clients generally hear about her through word of mouth.

> "PEOPLE DECIDE EXACTLY WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT YOU WITHIN ONE MINUTE, EVEN THIRTY SECONDS."

The tall, blond Lundgren keeps up with the trends in fashion but has developed a personal style that works in casual Austin. Natural and unpretentious, she avoids anything artificial and contrived. Her look artfully combines classic tailoring with contemporary hipness. It is understated, distinctive and comfortable, although perhaps too relaxed for Dallas and Houston. It is a style Lundgren calls "sophisticated but slightly groovy."

"All my clients want to look hip and with it," she says. "Some people, say from Dallas or Houston, have to be eased into the utter casualness of Austin. They need to learn when it's OK and when it's not to be casual. If you're going to the Headliners Club or Tarry House, you do need to dress like you're from out of town. When you're invited to someone's home, casual means a good-looking pants suit or a cute, sexy dress or whatever is appropriate. It does not mean jeans at all unless someone says wear jeans."

Her sartorial advice has kept legions of women—and men—from making fashion faux pas that can sidetrack careers, offend potential mates or nix new friendships. She tells you things that friends and spouses never say. "I'm gut-wrenchingly honest," she says. "I'm like the mother who makes sure you really do look good. I tell (clients) if they need an eye job or they don't need a face-lift or if their arms are too fat in a sleeveless dress."

"You know how fast we live. People decide exactly what they think about you within one minute, even thirty seconds," she adds. "They decide so much. This is about trying to control what others think about you a bit, about giving them the impression you want them to have, if you care about that. That's the key thing—if you care about it. I think you should."

Along with her advice about clothing, Lundgren makes suggestions about hairstyles, makeup, eyeglasses, bathing suits, raincoats, coats and even briefcases. "But basically, it's wardrobe," she says. Working with an assistant, Lundgren provides a package of services that includes handling returns, getting shoes repaired, picking up and delivering hose and makeup (among other things) and taking a client's castoffs to thrift and resale shops.

No fan of the big-hair and bright-color Texas stereotypes, she also steers clients to certain hair salons and colorists. "My clients don't want big hair," Lundgren says. "They want what's now—sleek hair, chunky color and sophisticated but casual clothes." She also sends them to makeup counters at Dillard's ("I do a lot with Chanel.") as well as Beau Visage ("It's like being at Barney's.") and Stage & Screen ("They have everything you need").

A native Austinite, Lundgren has an innate fashion sense that has been honed by experience. She was aware of clothes as a child because her mother sewed and loved beautiful fabrics. "I'm from a needle-friendly family," Lundgren quips. Although she studied journalism for a while, Lundgren earned a college degree in clothing and textiles from the University of Texas in 1979. She moved to New York to take a job at Macy's at its flagship Herald Square store, where she supervised 60 employees and $20 million in annual sales. "My department spanned a city block," she says. Two years later the boom in Austin brought her back home. Still interested in retail, she worked for a few months at Shepler's Western Wear ("It was the best money I could find") before becoming manager at Morgan's, a boutique on West 34th Street. Similar to fashionable enclaves in Houston and Dallas, Morgan's was a chic clothing store and hair salon that was the first in Austin to carry such exclusive lines as Michael Kors, Marc Jacobs and Steve Vaubel.

As part of her job Lundgren helped clients select clothes and develop their own personal styles, and she continued her personal consultations after hours. When owner Clayton Morgan closed the shop in 1989, Lundgren was at a crossroads: find another job in retailing or plunge into wardrobe consulting full time. She dove in. Since then, her Rolodex of clients has grown exponentially. Working from her home office, Lundgren schedules appointments with clients, scans dozens of fashion magazines, chats by telephone with retailers, and keeps tabs on new arrivals to the Austin fashion scene. She frequents certain stores and keeps up with the changing inventory in town. "I love By George, Charles Edwin, The Garden Room, but whoever has the merchandise, that's where I go...I make that judgment call each season," she says.

Lundgren is philosophical and practical about her profession, for which she charges $75 an hour for her time and expertise, much less for her assistant's. She claims to save money as well as time—Lundgren has been known to send a client back to the store with an unsupervised purchase. Handling decisions about clothes and shopping for clients leaves them more time for the "really important things in life," like a job, a husband or children. Her work, which she describes as "peaks and valleys," used to be seasonal but now takes up most of the year. Her office is the spare room of her home, which she says is on the "seedy fringes of Hyde Park," and she works from a starkly stylish, gunmetal-gray government-issue desk. Her real workplace is in shops and closets.

Always the professional, Lundgren has developed strict rules for an unconventional field. She advises only one person at a time and insists that a new client accompany her solo on their first shopping session—no friends, family or significant others are allowed to tag along. She thinks her advice is a positive influence on their lives. "I focus all my attention on them for two or three hours or however long we're together," she says. "It's a nice experience for people, to get some other adult's complete attention in this day and age when you can barely get your needs met anywhere."

Clients often give her keys to their home so she can work there in their absence. Describing one of her busy clients, Lundgren says, "She comes home to a beautifully organized closet. I leave her a list of what I think she needs, and then she calls me back and says, 'Go for it.' Then I go get it, bring it to her house and leave it there. I send my assistant to pick up the rejects, and then I just keep working on (the list) until it's all done."

Lundgren generally works a long day that includes consulting with several clients, shopping at various clothing stores, answering calls, and keeping track of billing.

"I do have clients I don't see eye to eye with," she concedes. "But each season I make a little more headway with them." She's still working on a stylish Austin doyenne who schedules sessions with Lundgren every spring and fall. "I'm still trying to get her into some fashion-forward shoes, and she's still insists on Ferragamo ballerina pumps with the grosgrain bow," she laughs.

"People are intimated by what I do," the gregarious Lundgren says with disbelief. "I don't feel like it's earth shattering, you know what I mean? I think you need to take all this with a grain of salt as best you can."

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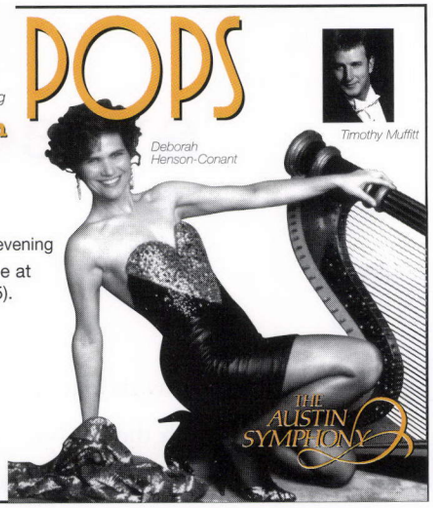

Words & Design

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gardens

By Erin Hynes

sweet imperfections

Not planting by the rules

Today is a warm, sunny day, and it makes me itchy to do something in the garden. So I scrounge through the tin box where I stash odds and ends of seeds—some I ordered last fall in anticipation of spring, some too old to be reliable, some freebies that seed companies sent because I'm a garden writer and some mystery seeds from e-mail friends. I find a packet of sweet pea seeds I'd ordered from The Fragrant Path. Perfect, easy to plant, beautiful and tough enough to take any cold weather that might yet await.

Seed packet in pocket and trowel in hand, I head for the little strip between the patio and what is supposed to be the back lawn. It is, instead, a collection of early spring weeds—dandelions, shepherd's purse, henbit, plus the offspring of some flowers I planted nearby last year, whose hopeful parents cast their seed beyond the flower bed's boundaries. I used to feel guilty about the lawn, a shame all the more bitter because I hold a master's degree in weed science, for crying out loud. Then I learned that these plants provide food for beneficial insects; by inviting them to my yard early on, I hope to have a healthy population of them should aphids decide to attack my gourds in mid-summer. So my dandelions are very cutting edge, la-dee-da.

Queen Catifah follows me out of the house. She is a foster kitty, one of three dozen Persians that the animal shelter confiscated from a breeder for cruelty. My daughter and I are caring for her and her babies—Salt and Peppa'—until the kittens are weaned and ready to be adopted. I break off a branch of catnip and toss it to her, wondering if this is her first taste. I like catnip because it stays green all winter; some people curse it because, like most mints, it has a bad habit of popping up all over the place.

It only takes a couple of minutes to poke the hard, round sweet pea seeds into the loose soil with my fingertip. It would take longer if I bothered to plant them in a straight row, but life is too short to be linear. The soil, which used to be hard and crusty, is now fluffy because last fall I covered the area with a few inches of horse manure, courtesy of Rose and Ross Vincent's horse Sassy. I hope the peas will do better than they have the past two years, when I planted many more than came up. But even in small numbers, they made a sweet showing until summer's heat did them in.

I walk a few steps over to see how Othello is doing. Othello is one of English rose breeder David Austin's creations. Austin is famous for roses that combine the toughness of old-fashioned roses with the beauty of fussy modern ones. My Othello, poor Moor, has not fared well in the three years since I planted him. He started out in a spot that didn't get enough sun, and when I finally moved him to a better place, the deer chomped him down to the ground. As soon as it warms up, I promise him, I'll treat his soil to some alfalfa pellets—the horse kind, not the salty rabbit kind—in hopes that the nitrogen will perk him up.

A quick visit to the wildflower planting—ah, now this looks promising! As it should since, in a space no more than 10 by 15 feet, I've tossed enough wildflower seed to blanket the entire Great Plains. Most of the seed sat around dormant through last year's drought, but with the fall and spring rains—kaboing! Wendy Whiner, our pick from an earlier litter of foster kittens, sniffs at the clumps of weedy grass (annual ryegrass? I *should* know this) that I pull out and toss aside. I don't mind weeds in my lawn, but take care to keep them out of the wildflowers for the first few years, until the mini-meadow is dense enough to shade out aggressive intruders.

I straighten up and survey the yard. Ahhh, it looks like ... hell. The salvia needs cutting back, the grass (no, the weeds) needs mowing, and I really should dig up the perennial morning glory that nearly swallowed the pergola last summer and move it to a place where it

gets less light (in hopes of slowing it down just a little) and has more space so I don't have to truss it up every few days.

For just an instant, I think one person with little time, less money, and no sense of design cannot do justice to this large a yard. For just an instant, I admit this mess of half-finished projects and half-filled flower beds is not the garden you'd expect of someone who writes gardening books for a living. For just an instant, I give way to the shoulda-coulda-wouldas—and I consider throwing in the trowel, as it were.

But then Catifah takes off after Wendy and I take off after them both, the three of us stopping, with varying degrees of gracefulness, at the perennial border along the fence on the other side of the yard. The bed that so delighted me last fall with the simultaneous blooming of the purple-blue aster beside the yellow-gold zexmenia. Even though the plants are dormant now—just a collection of bare stems I need to cut off—the memory of that perfect accident makes me look forward to this year's surprises.

And that is the essence of gardening—the kick of seeing how your notion of beauty, however vague or well-planned, turns out six months or a year or five years from now. Plants have a way of not following the book, of being shorter or taller, of blooming earlier or later, of flourishing when you think they're about to croak and vice versa. Someone who studies and plans and follows the rules may have a better chance of predicting the results, but even those of us who take a more haphazard approach are not denied the thrill. And perhaps it is even greater for us, because our success comes as such a surprise, a sign from nature that we are forgiven our imperfections.

Several Salvia species are well adapted to Austin. My favorites are Salvia greggii *for sun and* Salvia coccinea *for shade. Most garden centers carry those and others. For a display of a couple dozen different salvias, stop round the botany greenhouse on the UT campus in the fall.*

My perennial morning glory (Ipomoea quamoclit) *was a gift from my neighbours (British spelling, because they're British) Guy and Jean Page, who found it at Pots and Plants, 5902 Bee Caves Rd. (327-4564).*

*Purple-blue aster (*Aster*) and Zexmenia* (Wedelia hispida) *are available at Barton Springs Nursery, Pots and Plants and Gardenville, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd. (288-6113).*

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FALL ASTER

ZEXMENIA

CREATION

A proud and expectant parent,
I thrill at this womb, my garden.

From conception
through gestation,
I feed, I nourish,
I orchestrate each natal step.
No change in weight
nor switch in position
escapes my watchful eye.
I am heavy with hope.

I treasure each meager thump
as seedlings kick through soil
in search of their first whit of breath.
I marvel anew at the miracle,
the lively folds of tiny green fingers.

I beam like I've delivered a world.

—Scott Wiggerman

dining

By Diane Payton Gomez

austin steak out

A table-top tour of local steakhouses

I think of myself as being pretty health conscious. I eat lots of grains, greens and fresh fruit. On my plate, fish and fowl take precedence over red meat. But sometimes my tastebuds really crave a steak. It's just that simple. I want to bite into an exquisitely marbled chunk of tender red meat and hear Robert Mitchum cooing in my ear while strains of Aaron Copland's "Rodeo" well up in the background.

This is Texas, you know—cowboys and cattle. I discovered there still is a big demand for steak and a new interest in the old-fashioned steakhouse, although it is a lot fancier in the 1990s. What follows is an eclectic guide to Austin steakhouses, which, happily, are not all the same. Each restaurant has its own personality and, in its own way, something wonderful to offer the diner.

Austin Land and Cattle Company

This three-year-old steakhouse has a winning combination. The Austrian-trained chef has worked with Wolfgang Puck, his wife has been schooled in restaurant management and her father had a career with an El Paso steakhouse. The result is aged, hand-cut and trimmed Midwestern beef served alongside continental cuisine with a Texas twist.

The dimly-lit and cozy dining areas are on two levels, providing a touch of intimacy for a romantic evening. But this steakhouse also is family friendly. I've dined several times at the cattle company with relatives whose toddlers like to crawl under the table, crumble their crackers and dissect their hamburgers. Hamburgers aren't on the menu, but you may order one anyway.

Chef Christian Mertens' European-Texas influence is reflected in his delicate Texas sweet onion pie with crème fraîche as well as his tequila and coriander-cured *gravlax*. A standard on the menu is the grilled pork chop with Tabasco, garlic and spicewood honey. One recent evening featured orange roughy with citrus serrano salsa. Entrées are priced between $9.95 and $32.95.

My favorite is an order of charbroiled shrimp, a perfect blend of salty, herby, smoky flavors for succulent fresh shrimp. A small, moist and tender filet mignon wrapped in double-smoked Wisconsin bacon was delectable, and the thick, marbled ribeye was flavorful.

All steaks are served with fresh vegetables and a choice of rice or potatoes—your choice of mashed, baked or steakfries. The mashed potatoes were tasty but had a few undercooked lumps. Different vegetables are offered throughout the week. One night there was corn and fresh sautéed spinach while on another broccoli and sweet julienne carrots were the fare.

Our waitlady named Angel was just that. And speaking of things angelic, the rich, gooey chocolate cake is heavenly.

1205 N. Lamar (472-1813). Dinner only. Sunday–Thursday 5–10 pm, Friday & Saturday 5–11 pm. Bar.

GRAPHIC BY DAVID TIMMONS

Dan McKluskey's

On ever-changing 6th Street, Dan McKluskey's is steadfast. When Norbert Brandt and Joe Elmiger (of Louie's 106 and formerly Louie B's) took over the McKluskey's partnership in 1987, they added rack of lamb to the menu but basically left well-enough alone.

"Any time we tried to change something, people would complain," Elmiger says. "Customers going back to 1979 wanted the same menu they had come to rely on."

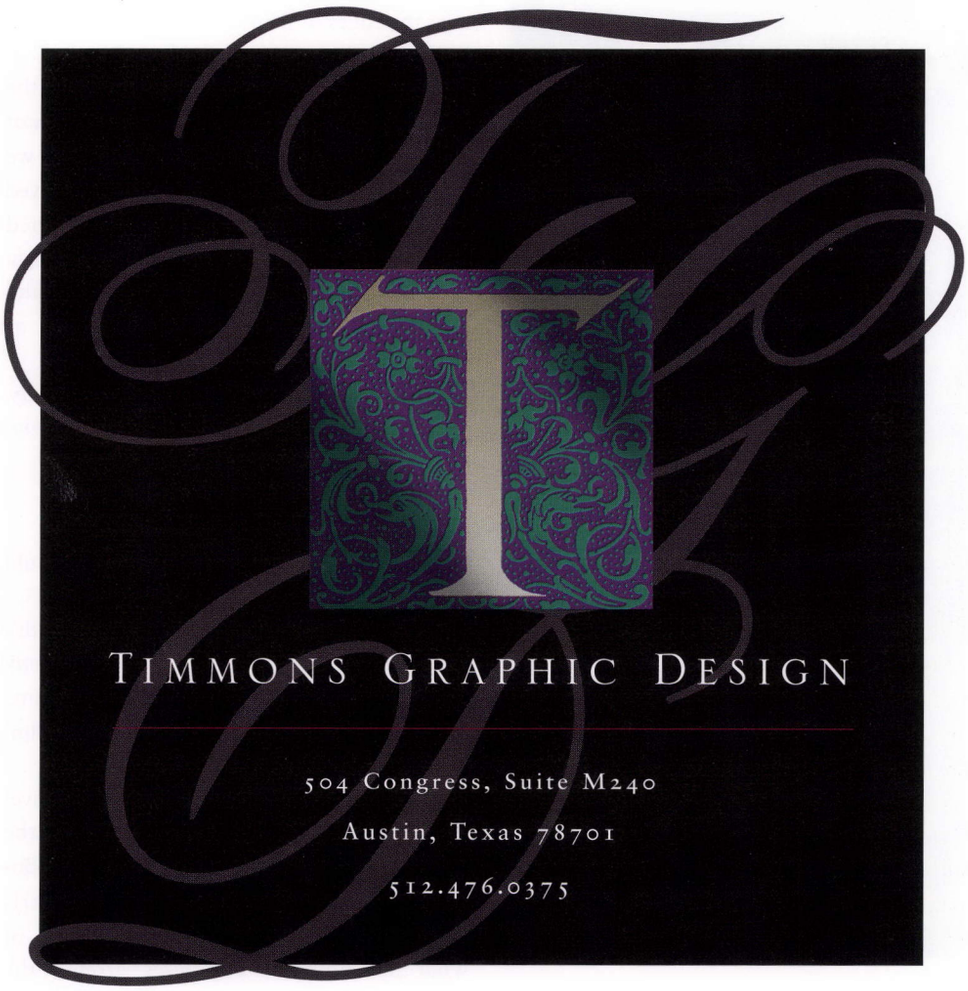
While the Arboretum restaurant has the same menu plus lunch on the weekends, the 6th Street location, housed in a historic building that once was home to Louie B's, has a certain charm. The design of the dining room upstairs is straightforward and without frills, yet inviting and comfortable. Vintage photos and Old Pecan Street Festival posters adorn the walls. White ceiling fans turn slowly overhead, and real gas lamps flicker in the corners.

Appetizers cover the gamut from clam chowder to calamari rings. The most popular appetizer is the jumbo mushrooms, which are filled with cheese, shrimp, crushed Ritz crackers and herbs. I know, because I cut the recipe out of the newspaper years ago.

I believe one reason this steakhouse has thrived for more than 16 years is that it offers so many options. Many of the steaks come in not just one or two, but four sizes, each priced accordingly to match a steak to an individual's particular appetite and pocketbook. And considering the quality of the steaks we had, plus the generous side dishes, prices are very reasonable, starting around $15 for a 7-ounce tenderloin filet and move up to $26 for 20 ounces of New York strip loin or ribeye. Our ribeye and New York strip were presented for our inspection before being cooked to our specifications.

Many diners prefer to pair a small steak with a choice of King Crab, fried or Cajun charbroiled shrimp, rock lobster tail, teriyaki chicken breast, blackened snapper, barbecued babyback ribs or a smoked pork chop.

I love the way the tossed salad comes in a big serving bowl with cups of dressing on the side. Another nice touch is that you may try one or a sampling of all the steak sauces (seasoned steak butter, béarnaise or red wine peppercorn) at no added cost. Also included with the entrée are delicious, hot chewy bread and a choice of baked potato (crispy peel, perfectly cooked interior and stuffed to the gills), French fries or rice pilaf.



The service at McKluskey's would satisfy royalty. Because our server forgot to bring the baked potato with our order, she insisted that we have dessert on the house to make up for the "inconvenience." Hot apple pie with a double dose of cinnamon ice cream—OK? Twist my arm.

Two locations: Downtown, 301 E. 6th (473-8924), and at the Arboretum, 10000 Research (346-0780). Downtown location serves weekday lunch 11:30 am–2 pm, dinner seven nights a week 5–10:30 pm. Arboretum, serves lunch and dinner, seven days a week. Lunch noon–2 pm, dinner 5–10:30 pm.

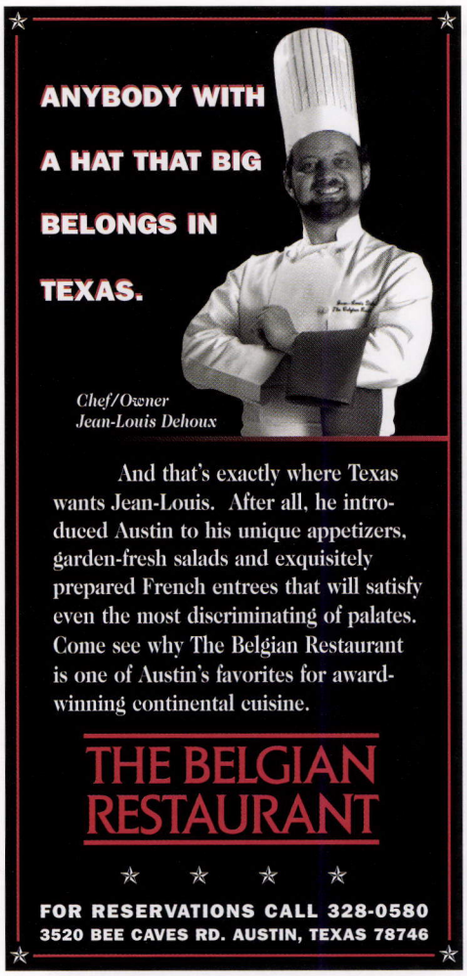
The Hoffbrau

"This is a real, real Austin restaurant," I overheard a woman at the table next to us say to her little boy in an excited, hushed tone. If you have ever been there, you will understand her excitement. After all, the Hoffbrau has been dishing out steaks since 1934.

Going there is like stepping back in time. The old adage "keep it simple, stupid" is pure genius today. Time-yellowed signs on the wall let the diner know that the establishment does not allow orders to go, split orders, checks or credit cards. There's no air conditioning and no reservations either. And yet, young and old alike line up along the sidewalk outside the Hoffbrau's screen door, waiting for a turn to sit at one of the 30-something seats inside or at one of the picnic tables outside. If you're a party of one or two, you may have to share a table for four with diners you've never met. That's OK, we're a friendly city.

Down-home setting or not, the napkins are made of cloth. And the waitresses (it doesn't seem politically correct to call them waitpersons here) are nice as pie. They can tell you lickity-split what you may order because, you see, there's no written menu. Just steak 'n taters or a chicken breast if you must, and do you want salad ($1.50 extra) or not? Repeat customers know to ask for bones to take home to the dog.

The salad is iceberg lettuce with salad olives and bits of tomato loaded down with a peppery, garlicky (hoo boy!) dressing. Along with your steak, you get white bread, brown bread and big chunky steakfries. The steaks—T-bone and sirloin—come in two sizes each and range in price from $7 to $13. The small steaks fill the plate while the large ones droop



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over the edges of the platter like a Dali watch.

There is no pretension that this is U.S. Prime. Hoffbrau steaks are more like the steaks Mom and Dad cooked at home—not butter-tender but still flavorful. The sirloin we wanted cooked medium well done arrived closer to well done while the T-bone ordered medium was perfect on one end but rare on the other. We told our smiling waitress, and she rushed the steak back to us cooked as requested. "Ya'll come back." We will.

613 W. 6th (472-0822). Weekdays only. Lunch 11 am–2 pm, dinner 5–8:30 pm. Domestic beer and wine coolers.

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse

"We thought the restaurant business would be great to get into when we opened in 1985," says Bill Andrews, franchise owner of Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. "Well, by 1986 the economy took a turn, and dozens of Austin restaurants were goin' belly up while those high-rollin' bankers were in Big Springs sittin' in jail."

A former television advertising executive, Andrews survived his experiment in the restaurant business just fine, thank you. But then, we're talking about Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. Andrews opened number 12 of what are now 59 franchises around the country, and that number is rising.

Each restaurant boasts something unique in its building history or design. Andrew's location is in a century-old building that was once a mercantile store and stagecoach stop.

"It may be the only building in Austin with a lease that states the landlord will repair all bullet holes in the wall," Andrews said.

When it comes to the menu, however, former chemist and founder Ruth Fertel insists on such strict recipe uniformity and preparation standards that steak lovers from Texas to Taiwan can expect to dine on the same style of satiny U.S. Prime—thick-cut and quickly seared in 1,800-degree broilers. Once you've savored buttery U.S. Prime, your tastebuds will never be the same. From a petite filet to a 22-ounce T-bone, priced between $18.95 and $30, steaks don't come any closer to perfect than this.

3010 Guadalupe (477-7884). Dinner only. Sunday–Thursday 5:30–10:30 pm, Friday & Saturday 5:30–11 pm. Bar. Nationally acclaimed wine list.

Sullivan's Steakhouse

Move over Chicago. In mid-1996, the downtown Austin warehouse district went upscale with the arrival of Sullivan's Steakhouse. A big, midwestern corporation has put some big bucks into this jazzy nightspot with what appears to be profitable results. If the crowd packed into Sullivan's on a recent, rainy weekday is an example of a typical evening, you had better make reservations before dropping in. Despite the restaurant's uptown veneer, the sockless fellow in his Weejuns, a well-dressed couple who looked like they stepped off a fashion runway in Milan and the business types loosening their ties reflected the dress code: whatever.

Walking into Sullivan's is like stepping into a 1940s time warp. The boisterous piano bar is festooned with colorful murals. The spacious dining room is paneled in mahogany, like an exclusive men's club. The kitchen is on display along with its enormous (and exceptional) wine rack, which is enclosed in a glass-fronted, temperature-controlled room. The restaurant's namesake is the 19th-century boxing champion, John L. Sullivan, and black-and-white photographs of the famed boxer decorate the rooms.

Sullivan's offers much more than glamorous window dressing. While grilled seafood and a number of chops are on the menu, the focus is steaks. Sullivan's serves the leaner Certified Angus Beef, aged two to three weeks, custom cut and quickly seared in the same kind of 1,800-degree broilers as Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. The smallest steak is an 8-ounce filet mignon, but most cuts range from 12 to 24 ounces and are priced between $20 and $26.

Each entree is served with an enormous wedge of iceberg lettuce, drenched in a savory bleu cheese dressing. So-called Caesar salads are available everywhere these days, but here you may have a real one topped with anchovy filets (on request). Generous side dishes are priced separately from $3 to $4. Worth trying are the subtly seasoned Horseradish Mashed Potatoes and the steamed-until-tender broccoli topped with a frothy, lemony Hollandaise.

If you want to treat yourself, splurge on the Maryland crab cakes, which are delicate, meaty and blessedly untouched by heavy filler or seasonings. Generous desserts—soufflés, baked Alaska, cheesecake, chocolate brownie cake, hot apple pie and crème brûlée—will satisfy any sweet tooth.

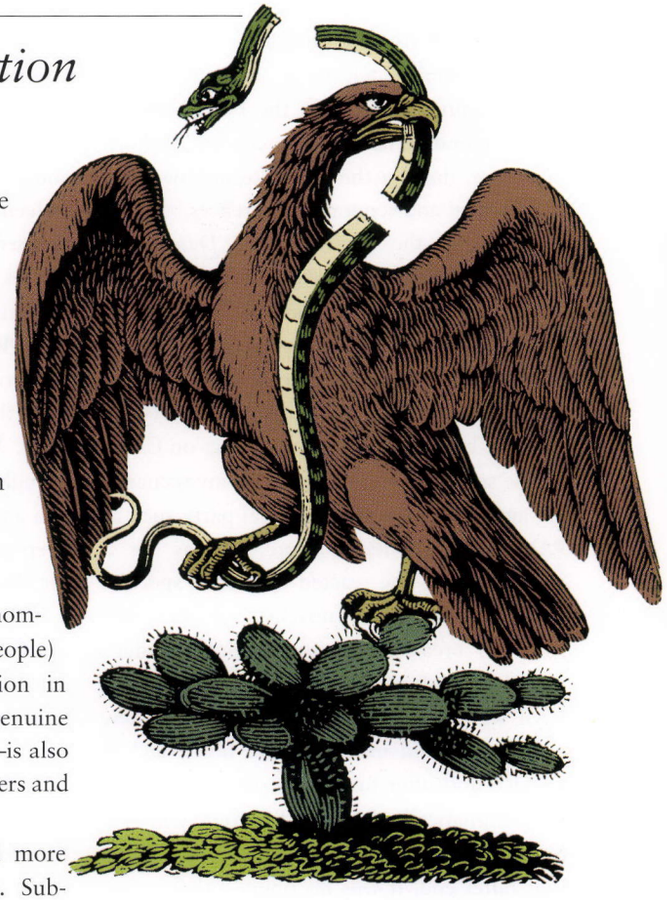
300 Colorado (495-6504). Dinner only. Monday–Saturday 5:30–11 pm. Bar opens at 4:30 pm. Extensive wine list. Closed Sundays.

stateside

By Austin Bay

dangerous liaisons

Mexico's next revolution



He wasn't wearing combat fatigues, he was wearing something far more dangerous to Mexico: a business suit.

I'll call the man Romero. He is a small businessman, by no means wealthy. He is also an embittered man with a sense of history and an articulate tongue. This makes him a dangerous man.

I met Romero in the Mexican state of Coahuila on a hot day in the high desert, in a place mutual friends considered safe enough to discuss Romero's thoughts on Mexico's next revolution.

As we shook hands he said in crisp, terse English, "You're the military writer for the paper in San Antonio. Novelist, right?" I nodded. He couldn't hide his nervousness, the faint agitation.

Arching an eyebrow, he said ruefully, "You're a native Texan, I understand. Northern Mexico and Texas share so much. So much history." Then the dangerous talk began: "Texas quit the domination of Mexico City earlier, you might say. Very early, 1836? Maybe we will follow, maybe soon. I'm already calling the new state, our new state free of Mexico City, the nation of TANUCO for Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon and Coahuila. Our capital will be Monterrey."

His eyes blazed, but his face remained cool.

Mad words? Perhaps, but from words like this, spoken by earnest men and women fed up with corruption, lies, oligarchies and deceit, change begins that alters maps and disrupts the body politic.

Profound change is brewing in Mexico, change that is edging toward revolution. The hundred-billion-dollar question is whether that revolution will be forged by bullets or fostered by ballots. The immediate financial loss to Texas and the United States caused by a Mexico in violent chaos—Mexico changed by bullets—is surely in that range of mega-millions. Add 100,000 dead to the disaster and fantastic speculation becomes plausible: Mexico collapsing like a micro-USSR, creating calamity and new geographies along our southern border.

On the other hand the potential economic plus to Texas (and the Mexican people) supplied by a ballot-driven revolution in Mexico—where change produces genuine democracy and a liberalized economy—is also a dollar sign followed by dramatic integers and zeros.

So far the bullets have received more international notice than the ballots. Subcommandante Marco's Mayan-Zapatista attack on January 1994 (the day the North American Free Trade Agreement kicked in) and the upstart Popular Revolutionary Army's (EPR) 1996 gunbattles in western Mexico have attracted the television cameras and commentators. Guns grab the attention of network news producers. The Zapatistas wear masks, which strike vague Lone Ranger echoes in TV-generation minds. The audacious EPR, originally based in the western state of Guerrero where they demonstrated an aptitude for ambushing police convoys, has even declared war on the established Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) government in Mexico City. "Underdog Bites the Corrupt Beast" is hot copy.

But after returning from a series of meetings with grass-roots Mexican political organizers in Mexico—men and women far less radical than Romero—I am persuaded that Mexico's real revolution is not being waged by flashy bandidos and aging, romantic Marxists. The fact is, in Mexican political terms, masked guerrillas with guns are more of a photo op than a means of positive change.

Nor is the most significant fight taking place in Mexico's oppressed, wretched and brutalized southern states. The truly potent revolt is a calculated ballot war taking place in Mexico's north—in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Chihuahua—in a tier of cities and states crackling right along the southern U.S. border.

The revolutionaries are blue-collar workers, farmers and the suit-and-tie middle classes who are fed up with the PRI's institutionalized corruption. This is the revolt with the potential for a huge, positive pay-off. One of the most important battles will take place July 6 when Mexico's next Chamber of Deputies and senate elections will occur.

The U.S. border is Mexico's frontline of political and social change and has been since at least the mid-1970s. The brewing "northern political revolt" was dramatically evident by the late 1980s, certainly in 1988 during that year's hotly contested Mexican presidential race.

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID TIMMONS

Searching for a means to illustrate this fundamental change six years ago, I suggested to a former U.S. State Department Latin American specialist that the same processes that brought down communism in Eastern Europe were weakening the PRI's grip on northern Mexico.

I proposed to him this highly speculative scenario: Yankee television (in Spanish and English) already saturates the border with a clear alternative to the PRI's corrupt authoritarianism, making the north keenly aware of the political and economic differences between Mexico and the United States. Democratic free-marketeers denounce government corruption and make political headway by appealing to regional disaffection. Disaffection leads to a political break from Mexico City's PRI authority. The PRI can't readily use police power to retaliate because it would all end up on CNN.

The specialist machine gunned my scenario. He agreed that another political party such as PAN had a political future, but as for a Mexican split—he reacted as if such speculation was the worst in novelistic deviltry. Any Mexican break-up, he said, would produce terrible tragedy in the same way the Mexican Civil War did between 1911 and 1924. A new civil war would mean massive bloodshed in Mexico and utter turmoil in south Texas. He said emphatically that the PRI would compromise or change—or repress—before it reached that bitter end. It was his opinion that a new armed civil conflict in Mexico would be a disaster for both the people of Mexico and of the United States.

Mexico's first civil war of this century—really a revolutionary era running from roughly 1911 into the late 1920s—was characterized by violence which, if not senseless, was at times utterly merciless. Many Texans have first-hand knowledge of the war's chaos, the cruelty of the revolutionary caudillos (military political bosses), the rank bloodshed with Indians and the poor caught in the crossfire.

In the Hollywood imagination, Pancho Villa is a romantic figure, a myth of sombreros, carbines and señoritas. In San Pedro de la Cueva, a village deep in the Sonoran Desert, he is remembered as a monster, the man who massacred 200 men, women and children in the plaza because one of his troops was sniped at outside of town. Military historian A.A. Nofi estimates at least 100,000 Mexicans perished—many by execution and starvation—during the civil war.

The PRI has maintained its grip on Mexican politics because it has promised—and to a great degree provided—stability in place of warlord violence. Better PRI control, the deal goes, than six-gun anarchy and Yankee interference. That stability, however, was based on sharing power among the caudillos. As the PRI fossilized, this meant sharing in the spoils of corruption. Power in Mexico City was based on "the boot"—brutal use of raw police power.

Marcos' 1994 revolt in Chiapas in the south showed that television cameras do indeed check police power. Marcos also focused on the corruption in former President Carlos Salinas' government. The Salinas government was certainly no more corrupt than past PRI administrations, but Marcos, taking a cue from PAN politicians in the north, recognizes that the Mexican people are fed up with theft. The old PRI machine, which once thought it could control everything with a slogan and a bribe, is now paralyzed and cannot keep pace with the Mexican people's demands for change.

Since 1990 other analysts have detected fractures that could produce a new map of Mexico. Jorge Bustamante of the Collegio de la Frontier Norte in Tijuana sees the potential for "three Mexicos": a northern Mexico run by the moderate-right PAN, a southern "Indian" Mexico run by the leftist-socialist Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) and a rump "PRI Mexico" in the center.

On my recent trip into Mexico, I met with several political activists. Talk in the northern Mexican states of Nuevo Leon and Coahuila is of a "tactical coalition" between two minority political parties, PAN and the PRD, that would triumph over the PRI in the 1997 Chamber of Deputies elections. Instead of being split by PRI shenanigans, the "honest left" will support "the honest right." The payoff: in the future, real, open, democratic elections.

Call this a revolutionary policy of ballots over bullets, the process of creating peaceful change and transforming the government.

But there are radicals who are ready if the ballots fail, and they don't all wear masks or spout Marxist rhetoric. Romero is one pre-eminent example.

Is a new map along Texas' southern border a possibility?

On that hot desert afternoon Romero insisted Mexico—the PRI's Mexico—was finished. With a jab of his finger he said, "You know the Soviet Union fell apart, why not Mexico? A new map of economic and political freedom?"

"What about southern Mexico?" I asked.

He shrugged. "The north I know. TANUCO—Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon and Coahuila. That can work."

"What about the state of Chihuahua," I asked.

"OK, Mr. Bay, call it TANUCOCHI. Chihuahua would fit nicely." Then he drew closer and his black eyes sparkled. "And perhaps, if you Texans become completely disgusted with Washington, TANUCOCHITEX. Eh? Not impossible?"

I was amused, but not enough to let him slide. "Brilliant soundbite. But what about the bullets? That's your big question. What happens when the army arrives?" I asked.

"Yours or ours?" he retorted.

"The Mexican Army," I replied.

He didn't answer. His stare—a difficult cipher—was his answer.

Then he said, "Tanuco has money, capital, education, we will have a free press, real democracy ... What chance would you give us in a revolt?"

"How large on your forces? You got defecting army battalions? Who's on your side."

He gazed at me carefully. "More than you might think." He stopped himself, adding nothing more.

"Does that mean," I guessed, "you don't know until the shooting starts?"

Romero smiled. "We will know much more after the elections," he said. "We'll know how far real change has gone."

I was perplexed. Then it hit me. "You don't mean to tell me you think you can start a new country by a vote."

"If there is real democracy, why not? If the change comes from the people?"

I shook my head. He continued to make his case with economic numbers and political poetry, but I began to suspect that Romero—for now—was guilty of provocative dreams and wit rather than real sedition. He was a leader on the breaking edge, but the fault line was not yet final. Good, I remember thinking, thank God. My idea of a shattered Mexico was informed speculation, an analytic theatric, not a prediction nor a desire.

Romero's wit, however, is a warning, a warning more cogent than the bullets in Guerrero or Zapatista masks. The bitter end has not been reached, but Mexico's next revolution needs to take place at the ballot box in 1997, certainly by 2000 and the next presidential election. If it doesn't, 2001 might look a lot more like 1911.

home

By Marie-Claire Quittelier

sublime limes

Simply perfect roast chicken

A perfect roast chicken is the essence of simplicity. Rosemary, thyme and garlic are ideal companions, but if you prefer something more exotic, try this slow roasted chicken with lime, ginger and lemon grass. All of these ingredients are generally available at our fresh markets. If you are unable to find lemon grass, double the lime zest.

Stuffing the cavity with limes, garlic and lemon grass subtly flavors the meat while a marinade using the same ingredients adds a piquancy to the crisp golden-brown skin. The result is a remarkably tender and flavorful chicken that also is easy to prepare.

Serve this fresh spring recipe with some grilled or steamed asparagus, a salad of organic field greens with a honey-mustard dressing or a mango salsa. A white wine, sauvignon blanc, nicely complements the flavors.

Slow Roasted Chicken with Lime, Ginger and Lemon Grass

Serves: 6
Preparation time: 45 minutes

Marinade
4 cloves garlic, halved
1-inch piece of ginger, peeled and sliced
1 stalk lemon grass, bulb only
Zest of one lime
1/2 bunch cilantro
1 jalapeño, de-seeded and chopped
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons lime juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper

1 6–7 pound roasting chicken
4 limes, quartered
4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
2 stalks lemon grass, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and pepper

1. Put the garlic, ginger, lemon grass, lime zest and cilantro leaves in the food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped. Add the chopped jalapeño. With the food processor running, pour the soy sauce, lime juice and olive oil through the feed tube. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside for marinade.

2. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

3. Remove the giblets and neck from the chicken cavity. Add them to the roasting pan to enhance the juices or refrigerate for stock.

4. Rinse the roasting chicken under cold running water and pat dry.

5. Fill the cavity with quartered limes, garlic cloves and lemon grass. Truss the bird or put the chicken on its back, twist the wings under its body and tie the legs together with string.

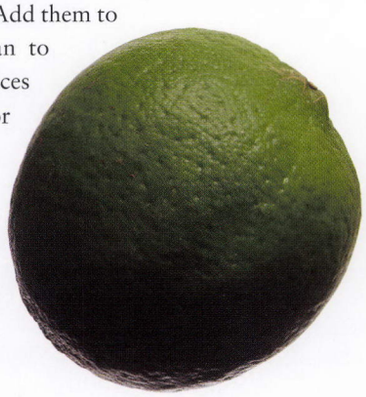
6. Rub the skin with olive oil, salt and pepper.

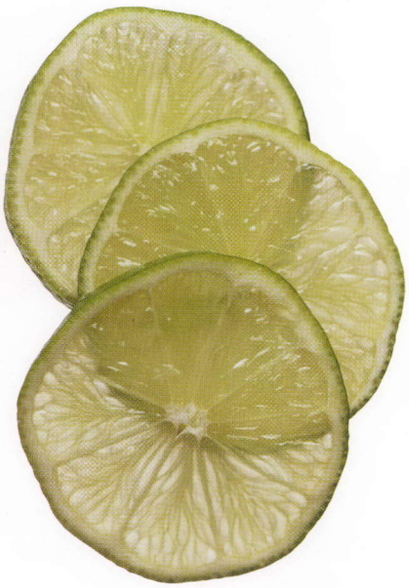
7. Put the chicken breast side up in a shallow pan and roast in the oven 10–15 minutes, until it has an attractive brown color. Reduce the heat to 375 degrees. Brush the marinade onto the chicken and cook for about 60 minutes. If the skin gets too dark, cover the bird with an aluminum foil tent. To test for doneness, pierce the flesh and see if the juices run clear without traces of pink. Or use an instant-read thermometer; the bird is done when the internal temperature reaches 160 degrees.

8. Remove the string as well as the lime quarters, garlic cloves and lemon grass from the cavity. Let the bird sit for about ten minutes before carving.

9. Garnish with fresh cilantro and lime quarters.

Marie-Claire Quittelier, internationally known as an expert on cooking and entertaining, was the first director of the Central Market Cooking School.





REAL KINKY

Kinky Friedman has done what most men only dream of doing. He was a singer-songwriter in the 1970s, playing with his own band and such icons as Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell and Eric Clapton. Now he is a well-known author with an international following and recognition that eclipses his fame as a musician. "I've been given a second act," he told the *New York Times* two years ago. "That doesn't often happen in America."

With his black Stetson and fringed buckskin coat, Friedman still looks like the country western singer he always wanted to be. He achieved in a matter of years what most men accomplish in a lifetime. A front man for a band that became an overnight sensation, he produced five albums and played the Grand Ole Opry, the showcase for national country stars. His song, "Sold American," became a top-10 country hit. He also traveled with Willie Nelson, sang on *Saturday Night Live* and played for years at New York's rollicking Lone Star Cafe. "He was one of Austin's success stories," says KVET talk-show host Sammy Allred, a long-time family friend.

Alice Wightman

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIRK R.TUCK

That was more than two decades ago. In the last ten years Friedman has come back on the national scene as an author of hip, offbeat mystery novels. While not among the *Times* best sellers, his fast-paced whodunits have won him national acclaim and a measure of respectability that eluded him before. His accomplishments would be the envy of any writer. His light-hearted novels, which he churns out at a rate of one a year, have been translated into 16 languages, and the number is rising. The books are reviewed semi-regularly—and favorably—by the *Times*. Friedman has an international fan club numbering in the thousands.

Music was always a part of his life. An avid fan of such country songwriters as Hank Williams, Johnny Cash and Jimmie Rodgers, Friedman was putting words to music before he was a teen-ager. Summers were spent singing around the campfire at the ranch, which was converted into a camp for children. In college, he formed a band and produced a single record while enrolled in the prestigious Plan II honors program at the University of Texas. After graduation, the idealism of the 1960s led him to join the Peace Corps, which sent him on a two-year stint in Borneo. He continued to write songs from a remote jungle village.

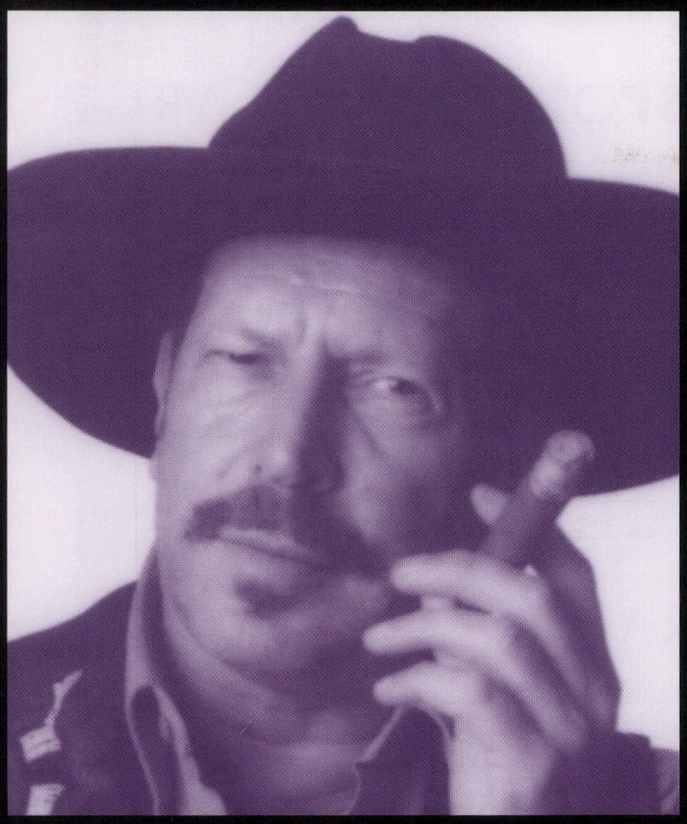
His music moved from the sidelines to center stage after Friedman came back to Texas, and from then on he was a man in a hurry. Unlike most musicians who work themselves up through the clubs, Friedman pulled together a band and cut a tape before he ever performed on stage. "It's a quasi-legendary tape." Friedman muses. "We recorded it up at the ranch on a six-track (tape deck) with blankets hung over the windows." By then he was calling himself Kinky—a nickname earned in college for his frizzy hair—because he thought no one named Richard Friedman could be a star. He named his band of country-rock musicians the Texas Jewboys—a takeoff on Bob Wills' Texas Playboys—although most of them weren't Jewish and Friedman wasn't religious. "It was a very avant-garde group," says Friedman. "We were definitely a cult band."

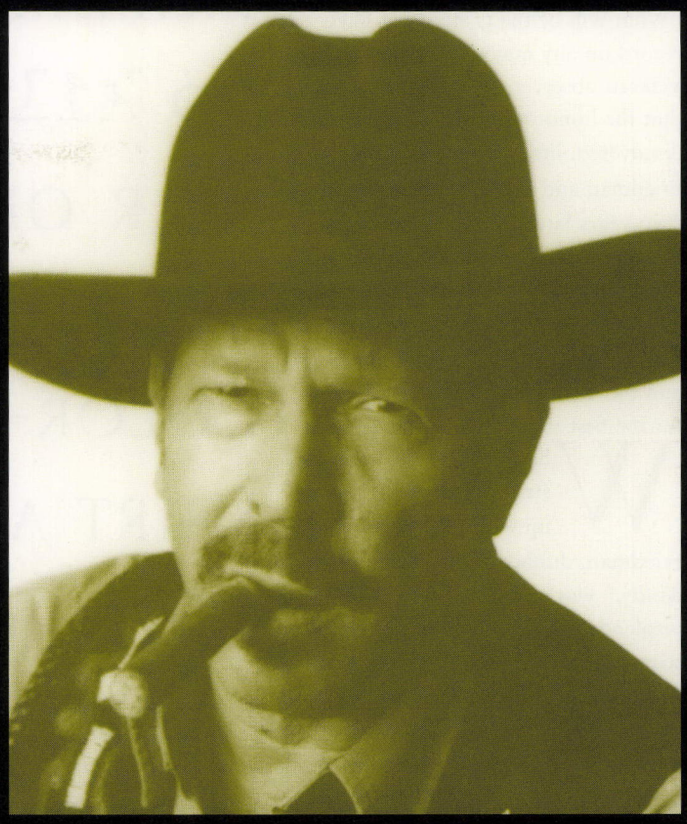
Moving to Los Angeles, Friedman shopped the tape around to major record labels without success. The national rock 'n' roll magazine *Rolling Stone* called it "music to offend

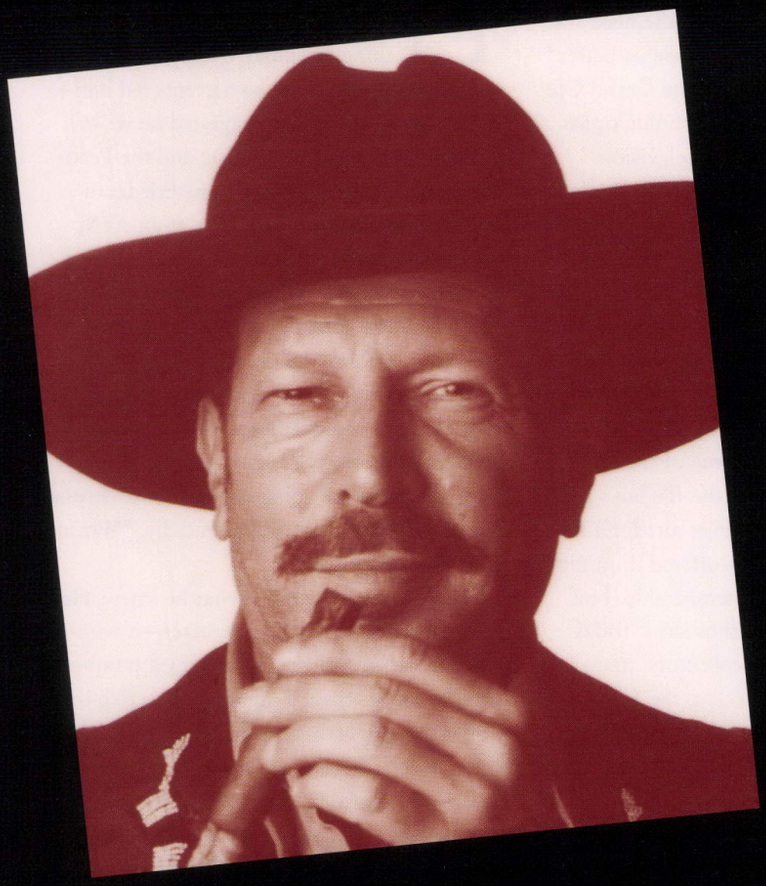
"This is something I never wanted to do. I wanted to be a country star. And I've said, if you want to be a country star, you'll wind up a best-selling novelist every time."

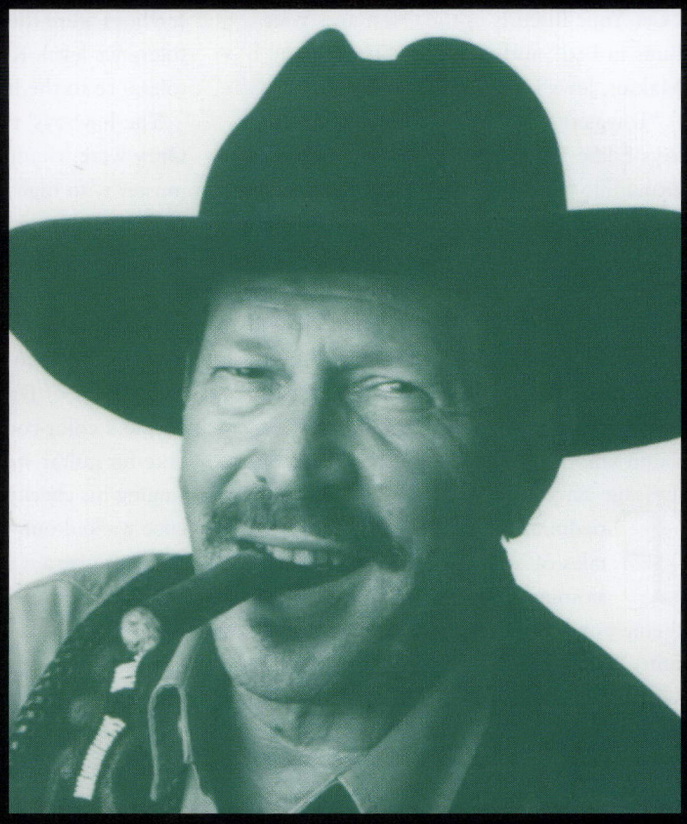
Among his admirers are South African President Nelson Mandela and President Bill Clinton. He has been to a White House dinner, where he sat at President Clinton's table, and lectured at Yale University. "Lots of people want to be authors," Friedman says. "This is something I never wanted to do. I wanted to be a country star. And I've said, if you want to be a country star, you'll wind up a best-selling novelist every time."

Born Richard Friedman in Chicago, he moved to Texas as an infant and was raised in Houston's West University Place. He always had a way with words. He learned to talk before he was a year old and wrote poetry by age six. He also learned to play chess about the same time and taught the family maid so he would always have an opponent. A Houston newspaper put his picture on the front page for the challenging game he played at age seven against a Russian chess grand master. When Friedman was nine, his family moved to Austin, where he started a life-long habit of spending summers at the family ranch outside Kerrville.









everyone" and added this caveat: "What will be the group least likely to record on any major label in 1971? Veteran observers here are predicting that the honor will fall to the recently discovered, little-celebrated Kinky Friedman and His Texas Jewboys." Two years later Vanguard Records, a progressive national label, gave them their big break and brought them to Nashville. With the release of their first album that year, Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys went on tour for the first time.

What the Jewboys lacked in stage presence they made up with *chutzpah*. Friedman, dubbed the "cowboy dandy," was a spirited showman, resplendent in satin cowboy shirts, sequined jackets, feathered Stetsons and colorful, hand-tooled cowboy boots—a style he calls "Texas-Jewish flamboyance." The Jewboys sang such tongue-in-cheek ditties as "Proud to be an Asshole from El Paso," "Men's Room L.A.," and "We Reserve the Right to Refuse Service to You." They poked fun at Eagle Scouts in "The Ballad of Charles Whitman," feminists in "Get Your Biscuits in the Oven and Your Buns in Bed" and racists in "They Ain't Making Jews Like Jesus Anymore."

"It was the cutting edge of social satire," says Eddie Wilson, former owner of the Armadillo World Headquarters. "He was to some the Rush Limbaugh of the '70s." In an about-face, *Rolling Stone* gave the first album favorable reviews: "(T)here's no mistaking a rare talent with something new to say that's both funny and eloquent," Lester Bangs wrote about *Sold American*. "... Kinky walks on his own road and doesn't give a damn who he offends as long as he gets the message across."

Friedman also wrote tender, wistful tales of heartbreak and regret as well as songs with a social conscience, a theme unknown in country music at the time. "Ride 'Em Jewboy" was a haunting song about the German concentration camps, "Rapid City, South Dakota," about pro-choice. "The outrageous songs were what I got known for," says Friedman. "In between were some pearls in the snow that got lost and still are."

Living on the ranch in Kerrville, Kinky and the Jewboys were on the periphery of the growing music scene in Austin, where Friedman was appreciated as a lyricist but often tolerated for being blunt, profane and outrageous. "Austin is a literate place, and we've always had this soft spot for people who had literary qualities," says Wilson, now owner of Threadgill's and Threadgill's World Headquarters. "Kinky and the Texas Jewboys were the perfect example of Austin's tolerance level. Kinky stretched the need for tolerance to the limit, and it made us better."

The Jewboys' two shows at the Grand Ole Opry were triumphs, but they couldn't pass muster with high-brow public television. They were chosen as some of the local talent to showcase on the fledgling *Austin City Limits*, a new series produced in 1976 by the PBS-affiliate KLRU. The day of their performance, Friedman was dressed to kill, sporting a large Star of David belt buckle, tinted glasses and a color-coordinated satin shirt and fake-fur guitar strap. Even before he started singing his cheeky songs, some of the audience walked out. Although the Jewboys put on an exuberant show, it never aired. KLRU general manager Bill Arhos offered it on tape as a bonus to the station membership, but "there were no takers," Arhos says. Today bootleg copies are prized collectors' items.

Never a commercial success, the Jewboys broke up after three years. Dylan, the fierce non-conformist Friedman admired as a young man, invited him on tour with a number of other well-known singers in the traveling Rolling Thunder Revue. One year later Friedman signed a contract with the Lone Star Cafe, a Mecca for Austin musicians in Manhattan. Carousing with notorious people and living off his reputation, he played once a week at the Lone Star for eight years. The crowds eventually thinned, and while Friedman dabbled in movies, radio and even a play, he was floundering personally and professionally.

His second wind came when he was 42. Writing fiction was not something Friedman decided to do, nor was he drawn to it. But two events led him to write novels: His father suggested he write about his experiences in music and the Peace Corps, and about the same time Friedman saved a woman from a mugger at an ATM machine in New York. When the police and the newspapers played up the nighttime rescue, Friedman, already a fan of such mystery writers as Arthur Conan Doyle and John D. McDonald, decided to write about crime; his father helped support him. Friedman finished his first book in only a few months. "I didn't have anything else going on, and I was strung out on cocaine," he admits candidly. "Writing kind of anchored me."

Friedman wrote about what he knew. He used himself as the lead character—a wisecracking, tough-talking, sometimes bumbling country singer turned amateur detective—as well as friends, family, pets, acquaintances and personal experiences in music and Borneo. It was a device, he says, that kept him writing. "I had no idea where I was going." Although he claims his manuscript was turned down 28 times, friends say in a

FRIEDMAN WAS DRESSED to kill, SPORTING A LARGE STAR OF DAVID BELT buckle, TINTED GLASSES AND A COLOR-COORDINATED SATIN SHIRT AND fake-fur GUITAR STRAP.

matter of months Friedman had a two-book contract and an agent. His first book, *Greenwich Killing Time,* was published in 1986. *A Case of Lone Star*, set at the Lone Star Cafe, followed a year later.

Each of his books is a mystery as well as a comedy, peppered with the wit, street smarts and dark, scatological humor Friedman is famous for. Although many people and events are like those in his own life, he won't say what is real and what is invention. *Armadillos and Old Lace*, published in 1994, may be his most autobiographical book. Most readers find the warmth, humor and phrasing in his books more appealing than the plots.

"What I work on is writing between the lines," says Friedman. "The people who don't read between the lines are never going to get much out of me." His references to little-known people, places and events outside the mainstream have brought him a wide following. "I try to put in people like Father Damien and Breaker Morant and others who people don't know about," he says. "I write for myself. Not many people do it, (and) not very many successful people do it." Friedman writes with an old electric typewriter, starting with only a few notes on the back of an envelope, and locks himself away at the ranch for weeks at a time until a book is finished. "I don't know what the plot is or who the killer is or what the motive is when I start," he says.

Despite the macho, cigar-chewing cowboy image Friedman has cultivated for decades, his books reveal a kind-hearted, sentimental man who cherishes his friends, family and wide assortment of pets that number several cats, two dogs and an armadillo. A bruising life in the fast lane has been replaced with a simpler way of living. He gave up drugs when he moved back to Texas in 1985, the same year his mother died. Living on the family ranch outside Kerrville, he travels widely but stays close to his father and younger sister who live in Austin. Although still single—Friedman often claims he's "married to the wind"—he always has the company of beautiful women.

Never one to have the support and backing of the industry, Friedman has done most of his own publicity to promote both his music and books. "I'll tell you what, if you don't promote yourself, no one else will," he says. Although he doesn't use a computer, Friedman has had a Web page for more than a year. The Kinky Friedman Crime Club began two months before that, says Nancy Parker, who handles the fan club from a trailer in Utopia, Texas. "It started with the mugs," she says, explaining that as a joke a friend sent Friedman 350 or so coffee mugs inscribed with his picture and The Kinky Friedman Crime Club. "But there was no club," she says.

Called "Cousin Nancy" although she's not related, Parker handles the club's activities. She mails out newletters and sells books, posters, "Village Irregular" T-shirts and other memorabilia under a separate business called Kinky Stuff. Parker, who used to design T-shirts and hats for another group, says Friedman gets 20 to 40 letters a day on the Internet from all over the world, mostly from professionals between 40 and 55 years old. "He has a huge following," she says.

With his growing popularity, Friedman finds his schedule more hectic. So far this year he has spent several weeks in Australia at the Perth International Writers' Festival, lectured at Yale University, toured the East Coast and was honored by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington, D.C. His eleventh mystery novel, *Road Kill*, is scheduled for release this fall, which should trigger more book tours. In keeping with his other novels, this one involves a murder plot against a friend—this time, Willie Nelson. "I've made a very personal book of out of it," Friedman says.

While he has no plans to abandon his popular whodunits, Friedman talks about working on another type of novel at the same time he writes the Kinky mysteries. There are other possibilities as well. At the White House in January for the National Medal of Arts awards, Friedman not only sat with President Clinton but also next to Sherry Lansing, president of Paramount Pictures, who expressed an interest in turning his books into movies. As a tribute to Friedman, old friends now are recording some of his songs for a new CD, *Ride 'Em Jewboy, Songs of Kinky Friedman*, which will be released this summer. Among the distinguished lineup so far are Nelson, Dylan and Delbert McClinton.

"I think it's the strangest thing," Friedman says of his transition. "It's the most pleasing thing, and it's one you couldn't do if you set out to do it. Certain people fall off the turnip truck at the right time ... That's one thing. Another is when you find yourself an over-the-hill country singer who never really made it commercially in the first place, but a lot of people know about you as a kind of funny flake from the '70s." He pauses for a moment. "I don't know what happened, but it's definitely what F. Scott Fitzgerald said could not happen: 'There's no second act in America.' This looks like it to me."

Lin Sutherland contributed to this article.

FRIEDMAN WROTE ABOUT WHAT HE knew. HE USED HIMSELF AS THE LEAD CHARACTER: A WISE-CRACKING, tough-TALKING, SOMETIMES BUMBLING COUNTRY SINGER TURNED amateur DETECTIVE.

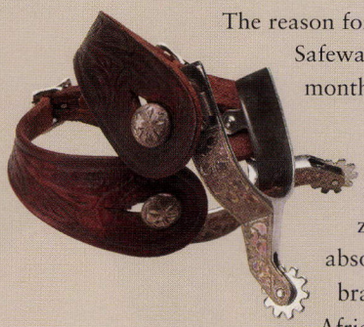
RODEO DRIVE

The five-year, 50,000-mile odyssey to photograph the offbeat rodeos of the Southwest

I suppose the moment, nearly ten years ago, when I burst into tears while perusing a magazine in the Safeway checkout line marked my surrender. That was when I finally gave up on publishing a photo-essay book and turning the world onto the "other" rodeos: African American, Native American, women's, kids', old-timers', Mexican, prison and gay. I had been photographing them for the last two years. I had even heard about a nudist rodeo, but never got close enough to learn the true meaning of the term "bareback riding" (to say nothing of "rawhide").

Story & photos by Sarah Bird

SPEED IS THE GOAL OF A MAINSTREAM RODEO. FUN, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS WHAT A BACK-COUNTRY, BLACK RODEO IS ABOUT.



The reason for my tears at Safeway was that, months earlier, I had proposed an article to that same magazine on my absolute favorite brand of rodeo, African American. They said thanks, but they already had another rodeo article in the works. Fair enough. In the meantime, I exhausted both my meager savings and the list of New York book publishers. I learned too late that, yes, it is possible to publish a photo-essay book, but your name better be Annie Liebowitz.

Facing the prospect of the dreaded full-time state job, I picked up that benighted magazine and unexpectedly discovered their rodeo article. What really drove the blade into my heart was that it was a generic rodeo article about generic, mainstream rodeo. I'd been to a couple of these shows, the ones organized by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. The sport these guys revere is football, and their goal is to take rodeo—the most hometown of activities—and process it into the same sort of denatured, homogenized product.

I LOVED HOW EACH GROUP TOOK THIS MOST AMERICAN OF PASTIMES AND REFASHIONED IT IN ITS OWN IMAGE

How could anyone choose boring, white-bread rodeo over the vivid hybrids I had fallen in love with? How could they choose the airless world of arena rodeo over the vast, little-known continents of alternative rodeo I had explored in my 1973 Vega station wagon?

And what explorations they were. I burned out two of the Vegamatic's "revolutionary" aluminum engines in my travels across Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Colorado to interview and photograph the men and women who rope and ride in the other rodeos. I went out barhopping with the lady bullriding champion of the world and her major rival, her 17-year-old daughter, the oldest of the champ's seven children. I learned the secrets of the last of the great Mexican maguey ropers (put a cotton ball soaked in mescal in the can with your rope). I helped chase runaway calves through the mimosa-scented night at a rural black rodeo. I got a little hooked on the adrenaline rush of standing in the arena with nothing but a second-hand camera between me and a ton of seriously unhappy bull. I slept in the back of the Vegamatic one too many times.

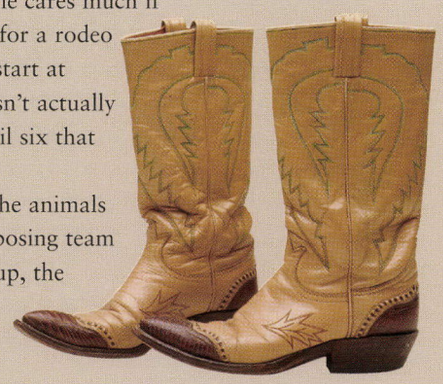
Although I had some adventures, I never did get that photo-essay book published. I went to work for the great state of Texas, put away my stacks of negatives and boxes of notes. Only after publishing three novels (*Alamo House*, *The Boyfriend School* and *The Mommy Club*) did the obvious truth hit me: What I loved most about all these oddball rodeos—how each group took this most American of pastimes and refashioned it in its own image—was the way it would work beautifully in fiction. That late-blooming epiphany became the novel, *Virgin of the Rodeo*. What follows is a brief description of the gloriously mutant rodeos that inspired it.

African-American Rodeo

Speed is the goal of a mainstream rodeo. Start on time and keep the show moving. Fun, on the other hand, is what a back country, black rodeo is about. At these rural fandangos, the actual rodeo takes second place to the all-day party that surrounds it.

In mainstream rodeo, the Fourth of July is considered the Cowboy's Christmas, with some of the biggest shows in the nation. Rural African Americans strap on the spurs for Juneteenth—June 19—the day the news of emancipation reached the slaves in Texas.

On Juneteenth, the pickups start arriving early to circle the ramshackle arenas in settlements like El Campo, Plum and Egypt. With a barbecue pit smoking, kids fishing in the creek, candy being sold for the Ebenezer Baptist Church and many toasts raised to the day, no one cares much if the stock for a rodeo slated to start at three doesn't actually arrive until six that evening.



When the animals of the opposing team do show up, the descendants of

the slaves and freedmen who worked the great cattle ranches of the Coastal Plains get busy. The events are like regular rodeo: Bronc and bull riders try to do it longer. Ropers try to do it quicker. And steer wrestlers—what do you say about the men who jump off the back of a charging horse onto the horned head of a fleeing animal?

The difference is attitude. Prissy manners reign at mainstream rodeos. In contrast, black rodeos are pageants of high drama. No John Wayne stoicism for these buckaroos. Contestants not only show pain, they'll writhe in wild theatrical agony.

The crowd doesn't hold back either. If a bronc rider at a mainstream rodeo is thrown, the fans politely applaud the effort. If a black cowboy doesn't put on an adequate performance, the audience jeers and hoots, and a good portion just might climb into the ring to show the rider how "the tale was told and the bronc was rode!"

The most fun you'll ever have watching enraged quadrupeds attempt to stomp the living poo out of human beings will be at an authentic country black rodeo.

Charreadas

For superb horsemanship and dazzling roping pyrotechnics, check out a *charreada,* which is actually a competition between teams of *charros,* or gentlemen cowboys.

Participants wear the dashing *charro* outfit of umbrella-sized sombrero (preferably felt), long-sleeved shirt in a color that complements the *charro* 's horse, a tie of a specified design, close-fitting trousers that may or may not be trimmed in intricate scrollwork and, of course, boots. The richer of these rich cowboys—hey, price a felt sombrero—wear what might be the second-most handsome bit of male apparel ever devised: the *charro* jacket. (On the right body, and you never see it on any other, the matador's jacket would have to be number one.)

But Mexican cowboys don't stop at *looking* great—they "put the meat on the table," as male strippers are apt to be commanded at bachelorette parties. The *charro* must guide his horse through a number of mandatory drills that call to mind the choreography of the Lipizzaner stallions.

Then there are the *colas,* which means "tails" and is shorthand for a series of maneuvers involving exactly that animal appendage. In the most impressive of the colas, the *charro* rides up behind a steer in full flight and drops him to the earth by twisting his tail. Sure beats jumping on that horned head.

And let us not forget *el paso de la muerte,* the pass of death. In *el paso,* a wild mare is driven in front of three horsemen. At precisely the right moment (wrong moments are what give this event its name), the middle rider flings himself in full gallop onto the back of the wild horse.

You thought rope tricks died with Will Rogers? Try "The Crinoline," "The Counter-Crinoline," "The Wind," "The Flower" and "The Map of Tuxtepec." They're all mandatory, highly stylized tricks right out of the *charro* handbook. A *charro* who knows his business can make his 90- to 120-foot rope do everything except windows and his superbly-trained horse everything except a tax return.

Native-American Rodeo

For culture shock without a passport, nothing beats Indian rodeo. These shows, staged throughout Indian country, offer a rare glimpse at living Native-American culture in action. As with all the very best shows, the rodeo itself is a side attraction at an Indian affair.

The granddaddy of them all, the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial (held in Red Rock State Park outside Gallup, N.M., in mid-August), features dancers from nearly every tribe in the country, pow-wows, demonstrations of Native-American crafts, a carnival midway, alligator wrestling and the food of the Navajo gods—mutton. Mutton stew, mutton burgers, mutton tacos. If you're not baa-ing by the time you leave Gallup, you just ain't gettin' with the program.

The purest of the Native-American fair/rodeo combos may be the White River Apache Fair, put on annually at the Fort Apache Reservation in Arizona over the Labor Day weekend. The White River Apaches make the argument that they are the only tribe never subdued by the U.S. Army. Like their valiant forebears, today's White

River Apaches still don't have a lot of use for the white man. Consequently, their Labor Day shebang remains fairly tourist free.

Apache families may even take advantage of the event to celebrate their tribe's exquisite coming-of-age ceremony, but it's a rare white visitor who will be allowed to attend. (My invitation came because I knew the owners of the trading post, who had been on the reservation since the '20s.)

One thing you're absolutely guaranteed of seeing at an Indian rodeo is team roping. Native-American cowboys are the country's biggest team roping devotees. A Navajo cowboy explained to me that the event's popularity grows out of the Indian approach to life. "When we come out to the rodeo, we don't just cheer for one person. We cheer for guys in our clan, in our tribe. We don't go for the spotlight alone so much. That's why we like team roping. You're not doing it all alone."

That generous attitude alone is enough to make an Indian rodeo a refreshing change from the dominant culture.

Other Alternative Rodeos

Though the kids may ride steers instead of bulls and the oldtimers may opt for breakaway roping rather than jangle their joints by leaping off their horse to tie down a calf, all the standard elements and *accoutrements* of mainstream rodeo seem to be there. But look a little closer.

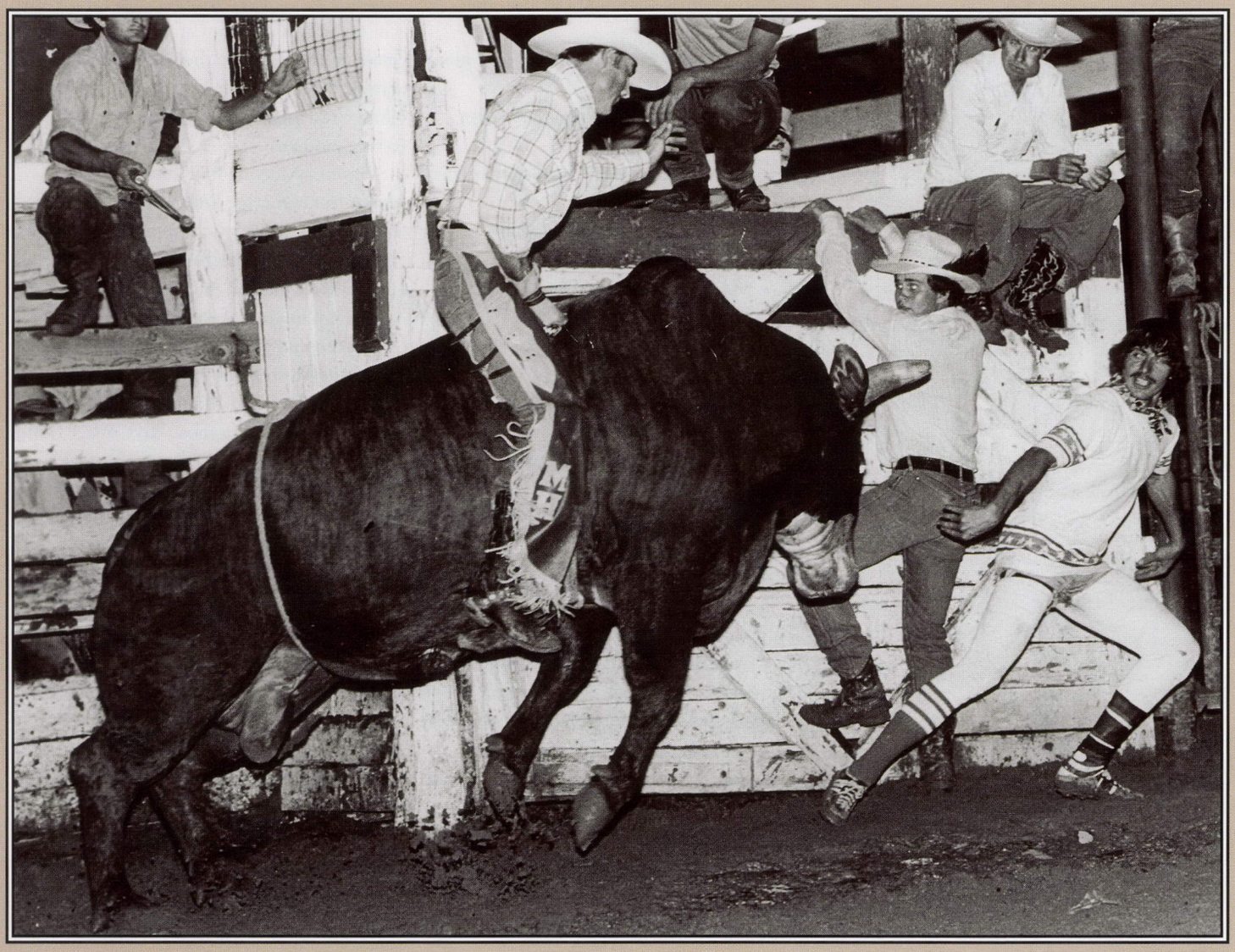
At the Women's Professional Rodeo held in Hereford, Texas—home of the Cowgirl Hall of Fame—that lady roper with the number pinned on her back isn't bending over that playpen to fix her spur. She's changing Junior's diaper.

And over at the rodeo finals, ending the season in Snyder, Texas, you'll see wads of chew goitering out cowboy cheeks, just like at any rodeo. The only difference is that these are the Junior Rodeo Finals, and the little dippers spitting tobacco juice into their Big Red cans are in fifth grade.

As for the oldtimers, they tend to approach rodeo in a completely different spirit than the younger cowboys. Most of them already have won all the buckles they'll ever need to hold up their jeans, so they come to have fun, see which of their running buddies are still alive and trade stories about the ones who aren't.

Gay rodeos, too, seem fairly standard-issue until you look a bit closer. The big difference you'll notice here is that everyone is having major amounts of fun. Outside of the African American circuit, gay rodeos offer the best chance of having a good time within whiffing distance of a fresh cow pie. At what other rodeos would the crowd bring thermoses of peach daiquiris for everyone in the vicinity to share? Where else will that Loretta Lynn look-alike use the men's restroom? And, I promise you, nowhere else but a gay rodeo will a judge congratulate the winning bronc rider with a great big French kiss!

Sarah Bird currently is writing a screenplay from her book, Virgin of the Rodeo, *which will be made into a movie directed by Callie Khouri.*



MAMBO

BY TOM DOYAL

My nephew Jeffrey, who is four years old, believes that he can cause an earthquake by putting his finger up his nose. Momma says that is the kind of crap that comes from trying to raise kids in some place like California. Jeffrey's mother, my sister Doreen, told Momma over the telephone that the counselor recommended treatment for Jeffrey. Momma's view was that for once nature had cooperated in the impossible task of civilizing a child. "Hell-fire," she said "going through life scared to pick his nose is not going to keep him out of law school. Why would you want to get him treated for it?"

Of course, Momma had given Doreen and her husband Jimmy Dale unshirted hell about everything since they moved off to California three years ago. She stood in the driveway bawling her eyes out the morning they got in that loaded station wagon to head out. "Don't call me for bus money home to Texas when you find out what its really like out there. I've lived my whole life for you kids, and this is the thanks I get."

"Momma," said Doreen, "live for yourself for a little while before its too late." Doreen looked over at me. She knew she was throwing me to the lions, but she told me the night before, "I've got to get the hell out of Mahler, Texas, and away from Momma before I go completely crazy and eat my own children. You're a man at eighteen. You can make it on your own, but I don't have a prayer if I keep living in this same town with Joan Crawford's hick sister playing the role of my mother."

Momma's crying had kind of quieted down to blubbering little sobs and it seemed like she might be switching gears in the direction of throwing another hissy fit when Jimmy Dale gunned the engine and sprayed gravel pulling out of the driveway.

Doreen and Jimmy Dale Hooper married when they were both sophomores in high school. Doreen and Momma were fighting like cats and dogs in those days. After Daddy died fumigating a grain elevator with cyanide, they really went at it. Doreen would go to the drive-in movies with Jimmy Dale on Friday night and not come home until Saturday afternoon. She quit even trying to make her lies sound believable. "You can't stand there and tell me that it took twenty-fours hours to fix a flat on a Ford pick-up," Momma screamed. "The next time I catch you lying to me that bad, I'm fixin' to stomp a mudhole in your butt and walk it dry. Now get in your room, and don't come out until I'm over wanting to kill you."

It's no wonder I thought the word "Momma" was a law enforcement title, sort of like "sheriff." For years I thought people who called their female parent "Mother"

PANTIES

were either putting on airs or just trying to hide the ugly truth.

Anyway, I was five years younger and trying to stay out of the line of fire. I heard Momma say to Lucille Kirk next door, "It's hard to believe Doreen is even kin to me. Lord, I don't know what I'm going to do with that girl. I've never seen a worse case of mambo panties."

Well, my eleven-year-old imagination just went right to work on those mambo panties. I thought they might be some kind of haunted underwear that took over your body and made you do a nasty hootchy-cootch dance, something with a Latin rhythm. Not that I knew much about dancing because we were Baptist. The church youth director wanted to keep us from the sin of dancing in the cafeteria after football games so he got the church to sponsor an alternative for all us Baptist kids. We had a hayride, all of us piled on the trailer of a flat-bed truck rolling around in about twenty busted bales of hay, some couples enjoying the occasion way more than the church had intended. The parents finally figured out what a failure their idea was when all the Catholic kids started trying to sign up for the hayride instead of the dance, and that ended the only brief advantage I ever experienced on account of being a Baptist.

Anyway, the whole idea of mambo panties kind of scared me. Of course, the next year I turned twelve and started to want a pair, and the year after that I was trying to figure out which girls might be wearing them. The rest, as they say, is history. I don't remember having a single thought for about six or eight years that wasn't some variation on the theme of mambo panties. That phrase had become a little drumbeat in my life, mambo panties, mambo panties. I guess I haven't matured so much as I have just gotten older.

The first time Doreen and Jimmy Dale came back to visit at Christmas, Doreen set us all down in the living room and made a little speech. "It's not too late," she said. "We can relate to each other in different ways than we have in the past."

"You are always going to be my daughter," said Momma. "That's how we are related."

"Momma, I'm just saying I'm willing to stop being co-dependent if you are," said Doreen. Jimmy Dale was sitting there real quiet, studying his fingernails, and I realized that he had already heard this stuff.

"What in the hell does *co-dependent* mean?" asked Momma.

Now mind you, this question came from a woman who withheld our Christmas presents in 1972 until Doreen and I both finally caved in and promised to pray for Richard Nixon. Whenever I hear some story of international diplomacy using the word *linked*, I think of Momma. You know, like should human rights be *linked* to economic aid. Well, if those over-paid sons-of-bitches in the State Department knew my Momma, the United States would control the whole world. Of course, if Momma's case is any model, world domination might not be as satisfying as it sounds at first.

Doreen's answer to Momma's question about *co-dependent* went on for quite a while, and the word *relationships* came up about ten or twenty times.

When she finally stopped talking, Momma said, "Just because you live in California now don't mean you can come dragging back here putting on airs in the very house you was raised in."

"Momma, I'm just trying to *communicate*," said Doreen.

"Why can't we just have a conversation?" asked Momma. "Why do we have to *communicate?*"

After Doreen's family meeting broke up and the hollering finally died down, I went to pick up my girlfriend Charlotte and brought her over to meet Doreen and Jimmy Dale. "How long have y'all been married," Charlotte asked Jimmy Dale.

"All my life," he said. "I didn't even get a period of self-abuse."

"That period of your life is fixing to start right now if you don't put on a happy face," said Doreen sweetly.

"Yes m'am," said Jimmy Dale, smiling.

"Don't be vulgar," said Momma.

"Yes m'am," said Jimmy Dale, still smiling at Doreen.

Jeffrey and Jason were running through the house playing warpath and whooping. Charlotte said she had to get back over to her folks because they always opened their presents on Christmas Eve. After I ran her back home, Jimmy Dale and I stood out in the carport and smoked a joint. It was a clear night, but not too cold. "Jimmy Dale, I'm sorry about Momma picking on y'all all the time," I said.

"It's not too bad since we moved out to California. Just ever now and then when her and Doreen have been going at each other over the phone, I have to tip-toe around for a day or two. Really, Doreen has done a lot better in the last year. Nothing personal, old buddy, but I'm stockpiling confetti for that

old woman's funeral."

We were out there a long time, just settin' on the tailgate of my truck and talking. I told him about mambo panties and he laughed.

Jimmy Dale said, "Once I went camping with the Vogel brothers and we ate some mushrooms and it occurred to me that sex was really the best part of life and the only way to make everything else bearable was to think of it as foreplay. That idea has got me through some bad shit, and I'm not just talking about your Momma."

"I kind of like that idea," I said. "What did Troy Vogel think about it? I mean, I ask because I hear his idea of foreplay kind of resembles assault."

"He told me later that he didn't think much of anything I said that night because I was so fucked up I was talking like Gomer Pyle," said Jimmy Dale.

"People miss out on some good stuff just because the person talking doesn't sound like Walter Cronkite," I said. "I think over time I've just decided to submit to the eternal rhythm of mambo panties. And I'm glad. You won't ever catch me going on about the road not taken."

"You going to marry Charlotte?" Jimmy Dale asked.

"I think so."

"Being married is okay. Doreen and I never wanted anything else and we just couldn't believe what a wall-eyed fit your Momma pitched."

"Well, Momma is a hard case. I think she resented the idea of sex about as much as anybody I've ever seen. It makes me wonder how she was able to have two kids," I said.

"Let's go look in on the boys. Those little devils are real cute when they are asleep. Don't worry about me and Doreen. We're going to survive this visit, just like everything else," said Jimmy Dale.

"How do you suppose Momma ever thought of a thing like mambo panties?" I asked.

"Maybe she was alive once," said Jimmy Dale.

"I hope so," I said, and we went in the house.

When we stepped into the kitchen, Momma turned from the stove and said, "Where the hell have you two been?"

"Just outside remembering the good times," said Jimmy Dale.

"If I had of had my way, you would have had fewer good times, Mr. Hooper," said Momma, shaking a long-handled wooden spoon at Jimmy Dale.

"I understand that, Mother. That must have been a hard time for you," Jimmy Dale said gently. "Even a strong woman can't hold back the tide by hollerin' at the ocean, Mother."

I sucked in a quick breath and waited for the explosion, but everything was real quiet. When I looked at Momma I saw her standing motionless in the middle of the kitchen floor holding that wooden spoon like a queen's scepter, tears running down her face. "Y'all go on to bed, " she said quietly.

"Yes m'am," said Jimmy Dale. And we left Momma standing in the yellow light of the kitchen, crying without a sound.

Tom Doyal is a fifth-generation Texan who writes and practices law in Austin, Texas.

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FOOD & DINING

BY MARIE-CLAIRE QUITTELIER, REBECCA CHASTENET DE GÉRY AND DIANE PAYTON GOMEZ

For its size, Austin has a wealth of restaurants. In fact, it boasts more restaurants per capita than any other U.S. city. Given so much to choose from, we have prepared this list of area favorites, which run the gamut from funky to cutting edge.

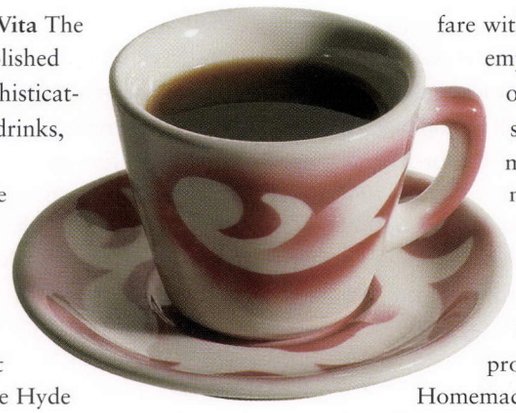
These listings are provided as a service to our readers and are under no obligation to advertisers. Tell us about your favorite places. Send comments to P.O. Box 5307, Austin, TX 78763 or e-mail to food@austinmagazine .com.

Coffee Houses

Austin Java Company Piles of magazines and newspapers suggest you may linger a while. With an in-house kitchen that offers a wide-ranging menu and desserts the size of small Frisbees, this quirky, low-key spot is a happening place anytime. Mon–Thurs 7am–midnight. Fri & Sat 7am–4pm. Sun 8am–11pm. 1206 Parkway (476-1829). Menu items $5–10.

HighLife Cafe Sink into the sofas, browse through the magazines, newspapers and books or pore over the day's *New York Times* at the bar. There's nothing to hurry you at the HighLife, a coffeehouse/cafe by day and wine bar by night. High ceilings and a ventilation system make this unassuming downtown spot smoker friendly. Sun–Wed 9am–midnight. Thurs–Sat 9am–1am. 407 E. 7th (474-5338).

La Dolce Vita The simple, polished decor, sophisticated coffee drinks, ravishing homemade gelatos and top-of-the-line liqueurs at this unique Hyde Park corner shop are appealing night or day. An outside patio accommodates those who smoke as well as imbibe. Open daily 11am–midnight. 4222 Duval (323-2686).



Little City Business types, politicos and artists savor the coffee, sandwiches and scene at this hip downtown oasis, where you line up at night for a table and a view of who's doing what after hours. Mon–Fri 8am–midnight. Sat 9am–midnight. Sun 9am–10pm. 916 Congress (476-2489).

Mozart's Coffee Roasters This waterfront coffeehouse draws a more established crowd to its candlelit tables overlooking Lake Austin. Straightforward offerings cater to those who want to savor something sweet with their freshly roasted brews. Mon–Thurs 7am–11pm. Fri 7am–1am. Sat 8am–1am. Sun 8am–11pm. 3826 Lake Austin Blvd. (477-2900).

Contemporary

Bertram's Restaurant and Bar This downtown restaurant housed in an airy, renovated historic building offers a comfortable yet sophisticated Texas-style fare with an emphasis on seasonal menus, natural meats, game and local produce. Homemade bread. Bar. Private dining rooms. Dinner only, reserved parking. Mon–Thurs 5–10pm; Fri & Sat 5–11pm. 1601 Guadalupe (476-2743). Entrées $14–23.

Cafe Josie Sophisticated specialties from the world's spice zones—Mediterranean, Caribbean and Orient—capture the spotlight at this bright new cafe, the latest venture of veteran Austin Chef Charles Mayes. Atmosphere is casual, yet elegant. Covered outdoor patio. Beer & wine. Lunch Mon–Sun 11am–3pm. Dinner Mon–Sat 5:30–10pm. Closed Sundays. 1200-B W. 6th (322-9226). Dinner entrées $11–18.

Gilligan's Seafood A popular restaurant in the downtown warehouse district that offers a contemporary menu with Caribbean- and Cajun-style seafood specialties. Distinguished wine list. Weekday lunch 11:15am–2pm. Dinner Mon–Thurs 5–10pm, Fri & Sat 5–11pm, Sun 5:30–9:30pm. 407 Colorado (474-7474). Dinner entrées $13–19.

Louie's 106 A refined, festive European-style restaurant and bar, known for its tapas, Mediterranean-inspired cuisine and after-the-theater crowd. Distinguished wine list. Private dining rooms. Weekday lunch. Mon–Fri 11:15am–10:30pm. Dinner Sat & Sun 5–11pm. Valet parking at night. 106 E. 6th (476-2010). Dinner entrées $11.50–18.

Mars Restaurant A cozy, fashionable restaurant with a varied, eclectic menu marked by a contemporary Asian influence. One choice example is the bouillabaisse in a spicy Thai broth. Dinner only. Cozy bar. Tues–Thurs 5:30–10:30pm. Fri & Sat 5:30–11pm. Sun 5:30–10pm. Closed Mondays. 1610 San Antonio (472-3901). Entrées $7–17.

Mustang Restaurant Near the warehouse district, this contemporary restaurant offers an eclectic menu of California- and Cajun-style appetizers and entrées prepared with a creative twist. Bar. Weekday lunch 11:30am–2:30pm. Dinner Mon–Thurs 5:30–10pm, Sat & Sun 5:30–11pm. 400 Lavaca (472-2363). Dinner entrées $9–19.

Shoreline Grill Chef Dan Haverty has developed a seasonal menu with a Mediterranean flair for sophisticated diners who enjoy a view of Town Lake and the nightly sortie of the Congress Avenue bats. Bar. Free underground parking. Weekday lunch 11am–2pm. Dinner Sun–Thurs 5–10pm, Fri & Sat 5–10:30pm. 98 San Jacinto (477-3300). Dinner entrées $12–24.

Zoot Refined bistro atmosphere in an intimate westside cottage. Changing, upscale cuisine with European and Asian accents that is as tasty as it is pretty to look at on the plate. Nationally acclaimed wine list. Dinner only Sun–Thurs 5:30–10:30pm, Fri & Sat 5:30–11pm. Sunday brunch 11am–2pm. Reservations recommended. 509 Hearn (477-6535). Entrées $13–22.

Continental

Belgian Restaurant Fresh flowers, crisp linens and candles complement fine Continental cuisine. Specialties include waterzooi, beef béarnaise and desserts made with famous Belgian chocolate. Weekday lunch Mon–Fri 11:30am–2pm. Dinner Sun–Thurs 6–10pm, Fri & Sat 6–11pm. 3520 Bee Caves (328-0580). Dinner entrées $8–20.

Green Pastures American and European classics graciously served in a rambling Victorian home surrounded by stately oaks. Sunday buffet brunch (11am–2pm) is an old Austin institution. Lunch Mon–Sat 11am–2pm. Dinner Mon–Sun 6–9pm. 811 W. Live Oak (444-1888). Dinner entrées $15–25.

Jean Pierre's Upstairs Continental cuisine served in an elegant, romantic setting. Private dining rooms are said to be choice meeting places for businessmen and legislators. Weekday lunch 11:30am–2pm. Dinner Mon–Sat 6–10pm. Closed Sundays. 3500 Jefferson, 2nd floor (454-4811). Dinner entrées $12–20.

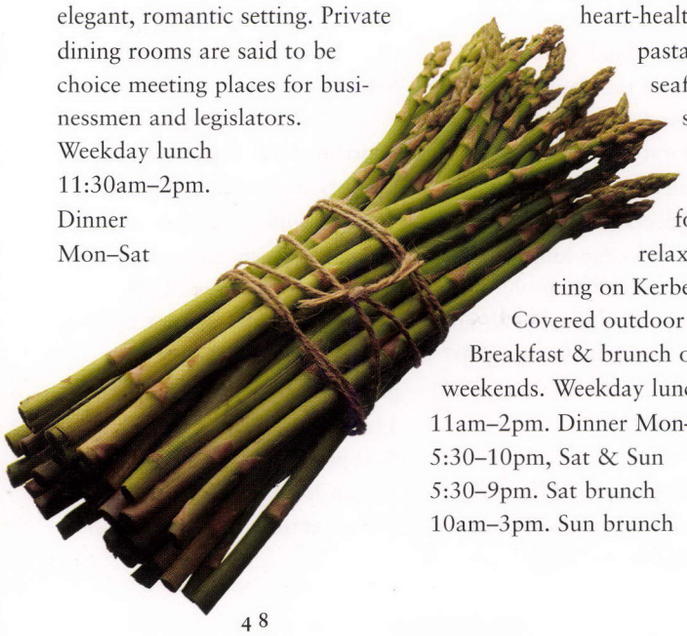
Deli

Katz's Deli & Bar As close to a genuine New York deli as you can get in Austin Katz's serves kosher, vegetarian and grilled meat sandwiches and plate dinners as well as copious breakfasts. Special 2-for-1 breakfasts on weekdays. Nightly rooftop dining and dancing upstairs at Top of the Marc draws a sizable over-40 crowd. Open 24 hours. 618 W. 6th (472-2037). Dinner entrées $5–15.

Phoenicia Bakery & Deli A Mediterranean paradise far from the sea's tranquil turquoise waters, Phoenicia supplies Austinites with freshly baked pita bread, a selection of exotic sandwiches and pastries and unique groceries in an atmosphere that mimics the family-run general store of yesteryear. A new North Austin location on Burnet Road is in the works. Mon–Fri 9:30am–7pm. Sat 9:30am–6pm. 2912 S. Lamar (447-4444).

Eclectic

Baby Louie's Chef Alan Somers prepares innovative, heart-healthy pasta and seafood specialties in a comfortable, relaxed setting on Kerbey Lane. Covered outdoor dining. Breakfast & brunch on weekends. Weekday lunch 11am–2pm. Dinner Mon–Fri 5:30–10pm, Sat & Sun 5:30–9pm. Sat brunch 10am–3pm. Sun brunch 9:30am–3pm. 1 Jefferson Sq. (458-2148). Dinner entrées $9–15.



Bitter End Bistro & Brewery A stylish brew pub with a savory, upscale menu and seasonal suds to match. Leather booths and small tables fill this converted split-level loft where imaginative takes on hearty comfort food receive rave reviews. The three-course *prix fixe* dinner Sundays and Mondays is an excellent value. Weekday lunch 11:30–2:30. Dinner Mon–Thurs 5:30–10:30, Fri & Sat 5:30–11pm. Sun 5:30–10pm. 311 Colorado (478-2337). Dinner entrées $10–19.

Castle Hill Cafe A bustling, popular Austin landmark, this convivial place is appreciated for its imaginative menu influenced by Thai, Southwestern, Mediterranean and interior Mexican cuisines. Menu changes every two weeks. Reasonably priced wines and sinful desserts. Weekday lunch 11am–2:30pm. Dinner Mon–Sat 6–10pm. Closed Sundays. 1101 W. 5th (476-0728). Dinner entrées $12–16.

Chez Zee Tasty, varied foods served with a flair in a bright, folk-art-lined location. A favorite spot for executive breakfasts. Live piano music on Friday and Saturday evenings as well as for Sunday brunch. In-house bakery. Bar. Mon–Thurs 7am–10:30pm. Fri 7am–11:30. Sat 9am–11:30pm. Sun 9am–10:30pm. 5406 Balcones (454-2666). Dinner entrées $8–14.

Eastside Cafe Laid-back yet refined, this cozy restaurant located in a house just east of I-35 grows its own vegetables and herbs on the premises. Generous servings (half portions available) and wide vegetarian selections. Mon–Thurs 11am–10pm. Fri 11am–11pm. Sat 11am–11pm. Sun 11am–10pm. Saturday and Sunday brunch until 3pm. Reservations recommended. 2113 Manor (476-5858). Dinner entrées $9–17.

Granite Cafe This upstairs, upscale eatery, a favored crossroads for West Austin residents, features contemporary Southwestern and continental foods in a lively setting. Covered patio dining. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10pm. Fri & Sat 11:30am–11pm. Sun 11:30am–10pm. Weekend brunch until 3pm. 2905 San Gabriel (472-6483). Dinner entrées $9–19.

Skyline Grill This inviting cottage restaurant just south of the river offers reasonably priced, inventive Texas fare—most of it smoked over native woods—using natural meats, fresh Gulf Coast seafood and locally raised game. Bar. Sun–Thurs 11am–10:30pm. Fri & Sat 11am–11pm. Saturday & Sunday brunch 11am–3pm. Reservations recommended on the weekends. 801 S. Lamar (443-3700). Dinner entrées $6–12.

Z-Tejas A comfortable, stylish restaurant serving innovative Southwestern cuisine. The West End location is famous for its 2-for-1 weekday breakfasts, the Arboretum site, for its sleek decor and view of the hills. Both places feature Saturday and Sunday brunch and late-night weekend dining. Sixth Street hours: Mon–Thurs 7am–11pm. Fri 11am–midnight. Sat 10am–midnight. Sun 10am–10pm. Arboretum: Mon–Thurs 11am–10:30pm. Free valet parking at night at both locations. 1110 W. 6th (478-5355) and 9400 Arboretum Blvd. (346-3506). Dinner entrées $11–19.

French

Chez Nous Austin's veteran French restaurant has been turning out classic Gallic fare and seasonal menus since 1982 in a charming bistro setting. The three-course *prix fixe* dinner is an exceptional bargain. Lunch Tues–Fri 11:45am–2pm. Dinner Tues–Sun 6–10:30pm. Closed Mondays. Valet parking at night. 510 Neches (473-2413). Dinner entrées $14–20.

Jean-Luc's French Bistro An authentic French bistro offering homestyle favorites from France's countryside. Three-course *prix fixe* dinner Monday through Thursday is a good deal. Carefully chosen wine list features little-known crus from across France. Sumptuous desserts. Bar. Weekday lunch Mon–Fri 11am–2pm. Dinner Mon–Thurs 5–10pm. Fri & Sat 6–11pm. Closed Sundays except on holidays. 705 Colorado (494-0033). Dinner entrées $10–20.

La Madeleine French Bakery and Cafe A popular, French country cafe with a limited menu (breakfast, sandwiches, soups, quiche, salads and pasta) served cafeteria style. Freshly baked breads, pastries and rich coffees draw a morning crowd, and mid-day is favored by ladies. Seasonal wine tastings at the Lamar location. Sun–Thurs 7am–10pm. Fri & Sat until 11pm. 3418 N. Lamar (302-1485); 9828 Great Hills Trail (502-2474); and 701 Capital of Texas Hwy. (306-1998).

Homestyle

County Line Barbecue with a view greets diners at both locations, where slow-smoked brisket and mammoth beef ribs take top honors. Turkey and chicken get the same treatment, and there's homemade cobbler for dessert. Open daily 11:30am–9pm. 5204 RM 2222 (346-3664) and 6500 W. Bee Caves (327-1742). Menu prices $9–19.

Hang Town Grill Bright, primary colors, comfortable booths, tall tables and counter service greet diners at this upscale, casual eatery, a favorite of families and folks on the run. Wood-fired individual pizzas, mesquite-grilled sandwiches and a slew of "designer" burger options make the menu special. Sun–Sat 11am–10pm. 2828 Rio Grande (476-8696); 9828 Great Hills Trail (349-9944); and 701 Capital of Texas Hwy. (347-1039). Menu prices $4–8.

Hula Hut Atmosphere and attitude along with a Polynesian- and Southwestern-style menu, great appetizers and drink specials. Fabulous lakeside location. Bar. Boat dock. Sun–Thurs 11am–10pm. Fri & Sat 11am–11pm (bar stays open until midnight). Valet parking on the weekends. 3825 Lake Austin Blvd. (476-4852). Dinner entrées $7–14.

Hyde Park Bar & Grill A convivial neighborhood cafe and restaurant, literally "at the fork" on Duval, serving a homestyle menu with a contemporary twist. Along with late-night dining, the cafe's battered French fries and Sunday brunch are local favorites. Bar. Open daily 11am–12 midnight. 4206 Duval (458-3168). Dinner entrées $6–12

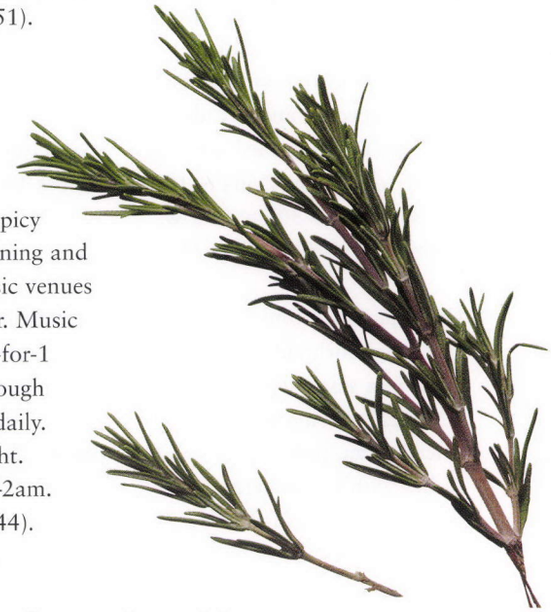
Kerbey Lane Cafe Home-grown food in a homey atmosphere keep this cafe filled 24 hours a day. The menu includes earthy vegetarian fare, burgers, Tex-Mex classics as well as a wide variety of breakfast foods. Late-night specials, senior citizen discounts and Tuesday discounts for kids. Open daily. Beer & wine. 3704 Kerbey Ln. (451-1436); 12602 Research (258-7757); and 2700 S. Lamar (445-4451).

Pearl's Oyster Bar A sleek yet comfortable restaurant that offers savory New Orleans–style seafood, spicy Cajun fare, late-night dining and one of the only live-music venues north of downtown. Bar. Music starts at 9pm. Special 2-for-1 lunches and dinners through December 1997. Open daily. Sun–Wed 11am–midnight. Thurs, Fri & Sat 11am–2am. 9033 Research (339-7444). Dinner entrées $10–20.

Ruby's Barbeque This small spot off the Drag has served up serious Texas barbecue for years with all-natural beef (free of growth hormones). Late-night customers love the hearty brisket taco, but Ruby's also serves Cajun specialties, including a vegetarian sausage and chicken jambalaya. Open daily. Sun–Thurs 11am–midnight. Fri & Sat 11am–2am. 512 W. 29th (477-1651). Menu prices $5–11.

Shady Grove Cafe A popular hangout for heaping hamburgers, Tex-Mex classics, vegetarian offerings and pitchers of beer in a kitschy, retro atmosphere. Outdoor seating under a pecan grove. Summer specials feature live music 8–10pm every Thursday (May through August) plus classic b&w films on the patio Fridays through Wednesdays. Open daily. Sun–Thurs 11am–10:30pm. Fri & Sat 11am–11pm. 1624 Barton Springs (474-9991). $5–8.

Texicalli Grill A South Austin institution, this festive little roadhouse, its walls and ceiling plastered with local music paraphernalia, has served up heaping salads, burgers, plate dinners and sandwiches to customers for more than 15 years. Unlike many



burger joints, Texicalli uses fresh ingredients. Mon–Thurs 7am–4pm; Fri 7am–9pm. Sat 7am–4pm. Closed Sundays. 534 E. Oltorf (442-2799). Menu prices $4.50–8.

Threadgill's Restaurant A hospitable, down-home restaurant that serves up generous portions of country comfort food amid memorabilia of the renowned Austin music scene. Outdoor patio. Bar. Live music on Mondays at the Riverside location, Wednesdays at the fabled N. Lamar location. Open daily. Sun–Sat 11am–10pm. 6416 N. Lamar (451-5440) and Threadgill's World Headquarters, 301 W. Riverside (472-9304). Supper prices $6–9.

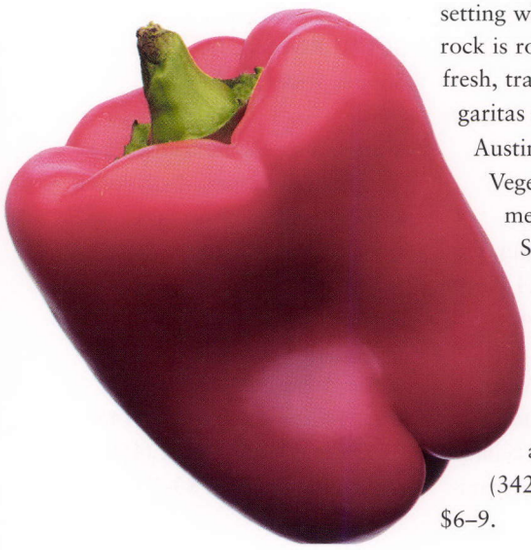
Waterloo Ice House Known for its oversized burgers, daily lunch specials and extensive beer selection, Waterloo is also a venue for new as well as established folk, country and jazz musicians. Open daily. Sun–Sat 11am–10pm. 600 N. Lamar (472-5400); 1106 W. 38th (451-5245); and 8600 Burnet (458-6544). Menu prices $3–7.

Italian

Basil's Restaurant The perfect spot to enjoy an intimate dinner, this cozy restaurant has a menu that features classic Italian favorites prepared with panache. Nightly specials and decadent desserts. Distinguished wine list. Dinner only. Sun–Thurs 6–10pm. Fri & Sat 6–10:30pm. 900 W. 10th (477-5576). Entrées $9–19.

Cafe Spiazzo A funky, comfortable neighborhood bistro tucked away in a small strip center off RM 2222 serving reasonably priced pizza, pasta, meat and fish dishes with a Northern Italian flair. Take out. Sun–Thurs 11–10pm. Fri & Sat 11–11pm. 5416 Parkcrest (459-9960). Dinner entrées $6–11.

Madam Nadalini's The architecture by Dick Clark tips you off that this is no ordinary restaurant. The cuisine is decidedly light and upscale, with a focus on such Northern Italian fare as pastas and risottos, although beef, veal, chicken and seafood are among the sophisticated offerings. Save room (if you can) for the homemade desserts. Weekday lunch. Mon–Fri 11am–10pm. Sat 5–10:30pm. Sun 5–9:30pm. 3663 Bee Caves (328-4858). Dinner entrées $11–18.



Mama Mia's Ristorante Italiano A wide selection of well-prepared traditional Italian specialties and heart-healthy dishes that will satisfy almost any taste. Saturday and Sunday brunch. Bar and cigar bar. Open daily. Sun–Thurs 10am–10pm. Fri & Sat 11am–11pm. 8015 Shoal Creek Blvd. (451-0177) and 13376 Research (335-8008). Dinner entrées $8–18.

Mezzaluna A stylish, happening downtown restaurant known for its Bellinis, antipasti, exceptional wines and lively bar. Open daily. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10:30pm. Fri 11:30–11pm. Sat 6–11pm, Sun 6–10pm. 310 Colorado (472-6770). Dinner entrées $9–22.

Stelline Pastaria This tidy Italian bistro, stashed in a strip shopping center, specializes in heaping bowls of classic Italian pasta dishes along with upscale meat and seafood entrées and several delectable antipasti plates to jump-start your meal. Lunch patrons favor the panini. Bar. Take out. Open daily. Mon–Thu 11am–10pm. Fri 11am–11pm. Sat 4pm–11pm. Sun 4pm–9pm. 2501 Parmer, Ste. 550 (339-8823). Dinner entrées $8–16.

Mexican

Chuy's Tex-Mex in a rollicking setting where Elvis still lives and rock is rollin'. Join the crowd for fresh, traditional fare, good margaritas and a lot of fun at these Austin institutions. Bar. Vegetarian dishes and kid's menu. Open daily. Sun–Thurs 11am–10:30pm. Fri & Sat 11am–11:30pm. 1728 Barton Springs (474-4452); 10520 N. Lamar (836-3218); and 11680 Research (342-0011). Dinner entrées $6–9.

Curra's A small, no-frills personal restaurant that serves tasty Tex-Mex as well as interior Mexican specialties. Breakfast., weekday lunch and weekend specials. Sun–Sat 7am–10pm. 614 E. Oltorf (444-0012). Dinner entrées $7–16.

El Sol y La Luna 1224 S. Congress (444-7770). A pleasant transformation of a funky Congress Avenue motel restaurant that combines fresh ingredients with traditional Tex-Mex. Breakfast all day. Fresh-squeezed orange juice. Sun–Tues 7am–3pm. Wed–Sat 7am–10pm. Menu items $5–9.

El Rinconcito Cocina Mexicana This cozy corner restaurant has a devoted following for its blend of South-of-the-border favorites and South American specialties. Weekday lunch specials and Sunday brunch. Beer, wine & margaritas. Mon–Thurs 11am–10pm. Fri 11am–11pm. Sat 5–11pm. Sunday brunch 11am–2, dinner 5–10pm. 1014 N. Lamar (476-5277). Dinner entrées $7–14.

Fonda San Miguel Antique wooden doors open into a Mexican hacienda that offers a feast for the eyes as well as the palate. Sophisticated interior Mexican cuisine includes homemade tortillas and sorbets. The Sunday brunch is not to be missed. Sun–Thurs 5:30–9:30pm, Fri & Sat 5:30pm–1am. Sunday brunch 11:30am–2pm. 2330 W. North Loop (459-4121). Dinner entrées $12–19.

Güero's Taco Bar A lively, bustling eatery where President Clinton dined on homemade Tex-Mex among the city's young, hip crowd. Famous for people watching and live music. Breakfast all day. Fresh-squeezed O.J. Lunch specials. Bar. Take out. Open daily. Mon–Fri 7am–10pm, Sat & Sun 8am–10pm. 1412 S. Congress (447-7688). Prices $5–17.

Jalisco Bar An authentic Mexican restaurant and bar with a mesquite grill and succulent cabrito as a specialty, known as a gathering place for the Hispanic community. Good margaritas by the pitcher. Mariachis every Wednesday. Weekday lunch 11am–3pm. Dinner Mon, Tues & Sun 4–10pm, Wed until 11pm. Fri & Sat 11am–midnight. 414 Barton Springs (476-4838). Dinner entrées $5–15.

Las Palomas Restaurant and Bar This pleasant restaurant has served skillfully prepared interior Mexican dishes since 1982. Delicate tortilla soup, exquisite shrimp with crisp garlic and rich pork in *pibil* sauce are a few of the specialties cooked to Amelia Corona's exacting specifications. Tues–Sat 11am–9:30pm. Sat 5–10pm. Sun 5–9:30pm. Closed Mondays. 3201 Bee Caves (327-9889). Dinner entrées $6–12.

Manuel's Downtown Stylish Tex-Mex and Mex-Mex offered in a sleek, contemporary decor. Famous for its half-price appetizers served during weekday happy hour and until midnight on Friday and Saturday. Bar. Sun–Thurs 11am–10:30pm. Fri & Sat 10:45am–midnight. Sunday jazz brunch 11am–4pm. 310 Congress (472-7555). Dinner entrées $7–15.

ZuZu Handmade Mexican Food 3633 Bee Caves Rd. (329-0393) and 5770 N. MoPac /Loop 1 (467-9295). Mexican food favorites are transformed with fresh herbs and vegetables, tangy citrus marinades and a trio of exceptional salsas. Daily specials. Take out. Children's menu. Sun–Thurs 11am–9pm. Fri & Sat 11am–10pm. Menu items $5–7.

New Cuisine

Brio and **Brio Vista** Creative, elegant cuisine with a distinctive Asian-cum-Southwestern flair is served in the comfort of a West End Victorian house or in stylish uptown digs near the Arboretum. Extended evening hours make this a popular spot for late-night diners. Distinguished wine list and superb desserts. Dinner only. Reservations recommended on the weekends. Free valet parking at both locations. Mon–Thurs 5:30–11pm, Fri & Sat 5:30pm–midnight. Closed Sundays. 1112 W. 6th (499-0442) and 9400 Arboretum Blvd. (342-2642). Entrées $13–19.

Café at The Four Seasons Famous for elegant dining and classic cuisine with a contemporary twist, prepared by Swiss-trained Chef Elmar Prambs. A local favorite for power breakfasts, Sunday buffet brunch with champagne and outdoor dining overlooking Town Lake. Daily lunch specials. Dinner menu changes weekly. Nationally acclaimed wine list. Mon–Fri 6:30am–11pm. Sat 7am–11pm. Sun 7–10:15am (breakfast); 10:30am–2pm (brunch); 2–6pm (light fare); 6–10pm (dinner). Free valet parking. Reservations recommended. 98 San Jacinto (478-4500). Dinner entrées $15–27.

Coyote Cafe Nationally renowned restaurateur Mark Miller brings his famous, fiery Santa Fe cuisine to Austin. Sophisticated dining amid a fashionable decor along with a rooftop bar, happy hour specials and innovative desserts. Weekday lunch 11:30am–2pm. Dinner Mon–Sat 5:30–10pm. Closed Sundays. 612 W. 6th (476-0612). Dinner entrées $10–20.

Hudson's on the Bend Fine dining in a Hill Country cottage surrounded by fresh herbs and flowers. Game dishes and house-smoked meats get top billing, and imaginative Southwestern sauces and glazes are unforgettable. Nationally acclaimed wine list. Dinner only. Open daily. Mon–Thurs 6–9:30pm. Fri & Sat 5:30–10pm. Sun 6–9pm. Reservations recommended. 3509 RM 620 N. (266-1369). Entrées $12–30.

Jeffrey's Restaurant In the vanguard of Austin's fine dining for over 20 years, this intimate, unpretentious restaurant in a West Austin neighborhood features an inspired cuisine prepared by European-trained Executive Chef David Garrido. Daily changing menu. Nationally acclaimed wine list. Bar. Dinner only. Mon–Sat 6–10pm. Closed Sundays. Reservations recommended. 1204 West Lynn (477-5584). Entrées $20–27.

Asian

Chinois Austin veteran restaurateur Ronald Cheng of Chinatown has launched a new concept with heart-healthy Chinese food straight off the grill. Already a favorite spot for business lunches, this downtown location on 6th Street, with its dark wood interior and bold art, provides the perfect backdrop for the upscale menu. Weekday lunch 11am–2:30pm, dinner 5–10:30pm. Sat 5–11pm. Weekend valet parking. Closed Sundays. 215 E. 6th (320-8018). Dinner entrées $8–17.

Pao's Mandarin House Regulars at this spacious Chinese restaurant tucked inside a downtown office building know to ask for the smaller specialty menu. A favored place for business types at lunch, Pao's fills at dinnertime with adventurous diners and natives in search of the authentic. Mon–Sun 11am–10pm. No Diners Club accepted. 800 Brazos (482-8100). Entrées $6–24.

Rainbow Seafood Restaurant Known for its dim sum, which is served on the weekends, and an extensive menu, this upscale Chinese restaurant also features a variety of very fresh seafood and authentic dishes. Bar. Take out. Weekday lunch 11am–3pm, dinner 5–10pm. Sat & Sun 11am–10pm (dim sum 11am–3pm). 4454 S. Lamar (892-2742). Entrées $6–12.

Satay A gem of a restaurant in a North Austin shopping center featuring Thai and Indonesian dishes with signature sauces now packaged for gourmet stores across the country. Fiery curries and luscious desserts. Beer & wine. Weekday lunch Mon–Fri 11am–2:30pm. Dinner Mon–Thurs 5–10pm, Fri & Sat 5–11pm. Sunday brunch noon–3pm. 3202 W. Anderson (467-6731). Dinner entrées $6–16.

Sea Dragon With a Chinese and Vietnamese menu listing more than 200 different offerings, lunch or dinner at Sea Dragon need never be the same. The restaurant features fare from the exotic (frog legs), to the more ordinary (some 20 noodle varieties). Other than the sizable fish and lobster tanks, the decor is standard strip center, but then with such an extensive menu, who has time to look around? Beer & wine. Weekday lunch 11am–2:30pm, dinner 5–10pm. Sat & Sun 11:30am–10pm. 8776-B Research in Grand Central Station (451-5051). Dinner entrées $5–13.

Suzi's China Grill The uptown counterpart to Suzi's Chinese Kitchen in sleek and stylish digs.

At night, Chinese meets haute cuisine with imagination, flair and tantalizing results. Bar. Take out. Mon–Thurs 11am–10pm. Fri & Sat 11am–11pm. Closed on Sundays for now. 7858 Shoal Creek (302-4600). Dinner entrées $9–15.

Taj Palace Indian Restaurant & Bar Look past the plastic table tops and busy motif and concentrate on the food—authentic Indian fare. Be enticed by cool tandoori meats and seafood, spice-laden curries, a vegetarian selection that is far from ordinary and several different breads freshly baked in the restaurant's traditional tandoor. Daily lunch buffet Mon–Fri 11:30am–2pm, Sat & Sun 11:30am–2:30pm. Dinner Sun–Thurs 5:30–10pm, Fri & Sat 5:30–10:30pm. 6700 Middle Fiskville (452-9959). Dinner entrées $7–12.

Thai Noodles Etc. House It's the food, not the setting. Fresh, plentiful and inexpensive bowls of Thai noodles, prepared to the same standards Foo Swasdee sets for her Satay restaurant. Daily specials. Beer & wine. Take out. Mon–Fri 11am–10pm. Sat & Sun noon–10pm. 2602 Guadalupe, behind the 7-Eleven (494-1011). Under $6.

Thai Passion A contemporary oasis in an historical downtown building, Thai Passion is known for its upscale cuisine and fresh, spicy, MSG-free fare. Stir fries and traditional Thai salads share billing with noodle dishes and curries laced with coconut milk. Take out. Weekday lunch 11am–2:30pm. Dinner Sun–Thurs 5–9:30pm, Fri & Sat 5–10pm. 620 Congress (472-1244). Dinner entrées $8–14.

Vegetarian

Mr. Natural An East Austin *taquería* that truly breaks the mold, Mr. Natural features Mexican vegetarian food in a tiny location shared with a yoga society. Offbeat and off the beaten path, this place serves up hearty vegetarian tamales, fajitas and enchiladas, and makes a mean chile relleno to boot. Take out. Mon–Wed 9am–6pm. Thurs–Sat 9am–9pm. Closed Sundays. 1901 E. Cesar Chavez (477-5228). Menu prices under $6.25.

West Lynn Cafe Upscale vegetarian cuisine with Southwestern and Mediterranean accents served in a modern, architectural transformation of a westside neighborhood gas station. Bar. Take out. Weekend brunch. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10pm. Fri 11:30am–10:30pm. Sat 11am–10:30pm. Sun 11am–9:30pm. 1110 West Lynn (482-0950). Dinner entrées $6–10.

On Exhibit

BY STEPHANIE PETERSON AND JOHN FERGUSON

The following is a selective guide to the visual arts—the organizations and galleries that regularly host major exhibitions of artwork in Austin. With distinctive media, styles and markets, each has something unique to offer the viewer. Exhibits are free unless noted. Given the long lead time, we encourage readers to confirm dates, times and locations.

Artists Coalition of Austin in the Artplex
Part of a collection of artists' studios and administrative offices, the ACA gallery exhibits a wide variety of artwork, with an emphasis on members' work and juried exhibitions.
May 1–May 25: Membership Show: exhibition by ACA members Sandy Lowder, Nina Yeager and Stella Bernstein.
May 29–June 21: "Aberrations—Unconventional Beauty, Wisdom and Technique." Juried by Steve Brudniak, a well-known Austin sculptor, the exhibit examines defining elements of contemporary art produced by Central Texas artists. Opening reception May 29, 6–9pm.
June 28–July 19: "Exhibit J," part of a continuing series of exhibits by members of the Austin Visual Arts Association. Opening reception June 28, 7–10pm.
1705 Guadalupe (474-7799). Hours: Tues–Fri 5–8pm & Sat noon–6pm.

DAVENPORT (IOWA) MUSEUM OF ART

Austin Museum of Art at Laguna Gloria
Housed in a Mediterranean-style villa built in 1916 on the shores of Lake Austin, Laguna Gloria is the original 12-acre home of AMOA and will continue to hold exhibitions in conjunction with the museum's downtown interim space.
Through April 30: In addition to the existing permanent outdoor sculpture, the Museum grounds temporarily will host works by Luis Jiménez, Jill Bedgood, Beverly Penn, Charles W. Perini and Gary Webernick.
May 17–18: Fiesta '97—The annual art show and festival on

MUSEUMS

BY JOHN FERGUSON

Austin History Center The building once was the "old main" library for the city before it became a repository for the extensive Austin-Travis County Collection, a compilation of almost anything and everything about Austin since 1955. Archived materials include newspaper files, photos, census records, city directories, video tapes of city council meetings and other board meetings as well as high school yearbooks. Photographs and other items from the collection are displayed throughout the year. "Beer and BBQ," the summer exhibit, opens May 9. Hours: Mon–Thurs 9am–9pm. Fri & Sat 9am–6pm. Sun 12–6pm. 810 Guadalupe (499-7480).

Capitol Complex Visitors Center Located in the southeast corner of the Capitol grounds, the three-story stucco structure built in 1856 is the restored General Land Office Building, designed in a 19th century mock-medieval style to resemble a castle. It was the Texas Confederate Museum for 70 years after the agency moved to other quarters. The oldest surviving state office building, it was on the verge of collapse in 1989 when the Daughters of the Confederacy moved the museum to Waco. After a two-year, $4 million renovation, the building now serves as a visitor center for the Capitol. It contains historical exhibits and a gift shop, offers guided tours and rotates traveling exhibits about every six months. The current exhibit—XIT: The Ranch that Built the Capitol—documents the colorful story of a cash-poor State of Texas that traded 3 million acres of land to a Chicago company for a new Capitol building. Hours: Tues–Fri 9am–5pm. Sat 10am–5pm. Closed Sundays & Mondays. 112 E. 11th (305-8400).

George Washington Carver Museum Once the city's main library at 9th Street and Congress, the building became the first branch library when moved to its current location in 1933. In 1980 it was converted into the George Washington Carver Museum, earning distinction as the state's first neighborhood black-history museum. Rotating exhibits focus on African-American culture, art and history. Hours: Tues–Thurs 10am–6pm. Fri & Sat noon–5pm. 1165 Angelina (472-4809).

French Legation Dating back to 1841, the French Legation was the headquarters for the French *chargé d'affaires*, Alphonse de Saligny, who moved to Austin shortly after France officially recognized Texas as a republic. A man of taste, de Saligny fashioned the French provincial-style cottage into the most luxurious residence of the time. The house was built with Bastrop pine, the windows were imported from France and the metalwork came from England. After Texas was annexed by the United States, the house was bought in 1848 by Dr. Joseph Robertson, and it stayed in his family for generations. Now operated by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the museum is furnished with 19th century antiques and is believed to have the only authentic French Creole kitchen in the country. Hours: Tues–Sun 1–5pm. 802 San Marcos (472-8180). Admission: $3 adults, $2 seniors and $1 children under 18.

Governor's Mansion This graceful antebellum mansion is one of only four original houses in the United States still in use as a governor's residence. Despite its elegant facade, the building was originally eight spare rooms, built by master builder Abner Cook with a budget of $17,000. With no money for furnishings, its first occupant, Governor Elisha Pease and family, brought their own. Additions to the building in 1914 almost doubled its size, but lack of state funding kept it close to its original condition. The gardens were refurbished with private funds in the 1960s and the building renovated with $3 million in the early 1980s. Private citizens donated the museum-quality 19th century antiques to create the mansion's first permanent decor. Free guided tours Mon–Fri 9:30–10:20am, self-guided tours, 11:40am–noon only. 1010 Colorado (463-5516).

Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum Four stories house the presidential papers and memorabilia of Lyndon Baines Johnson, a Texan from the Hill Country who became the 36th president of the United States. One of the city's most prominent works of modern architecture, the library contains invaluable archives of one of the most turbulent periods in the nation, ceremonial gifts, campaign paraphernalia as well as a replica of the Oval Office. The museum displays national touring exhibits and items from the collection, including LBJ's famous speech in which he declined to run for re-election in 1968. Hours: Mon–Sun 9am–5pm. 2313 Red River (916-5137).

Elisabet Ney Museum The Austin studio of the German-born and trained sculptor Elisabet Ney resembles a small castle. Named Formosa after her European studio, the limestone building was where she created the life-size figures of such famous Texas personalities as Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston. Ney lived in Texas for 34 years until her death in 1907. The museum, founded shortly after her death, houses her remarkable collection of marble busts, bronze statues and plaster models. There is no other artist's studio like it outside the northeast United States. Hours: Wed–Sun 10am–5pm. Sun noon–5pm. 304 E. 44th (458-2255).

Neil-Cochran Museum House This graceful Greek-revival home, a scaled-down version of the Governor's mansion, was built by Abner Cook in 1855. Within a year it temporarily was leased to the state as an institute for the blind and nine years later as a hospital for union troops, which are said to haunt the building. It became the home of Col. Andrew Neill in 1876 and later Judge T. B. Cochran, who expanded the house considerably. Bought from the Cochran family in 1958, the house was converted into a museum, restored and furnished with period antiques by the Texas branch of the Colonial Dames of America. Hours: Wed–Sun 2–5pm. 2310 San Gabriel (478-2335).

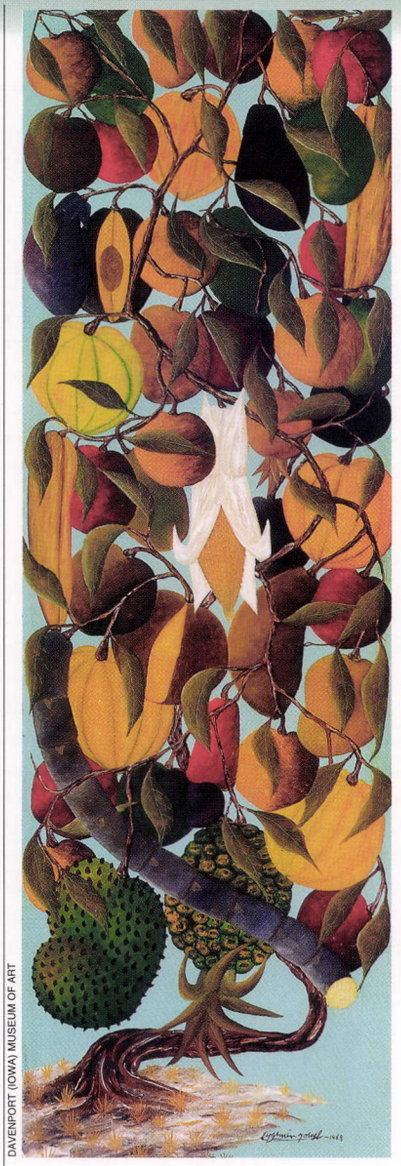
O. Henry Home and Museum Acclaimed as America's top short-story writer, William S. Porter once lived in this Victorian cottage in Austin, working as a draftsman, bank teller and other assorted jobs to support himself and his family. Some of his cartoons and early stories were printed in *Rolling Stone*, a weekly paper he published on the back porch of this house. Porter's skill and style as a writer were honed while he was in prison, where he adopted the pen name O. Henry to get his stories published, and afterwards he moved to New York. The museum contains his desk, original editions of some of his work and mementos from his home and family. Hours: Wed–Sun noon–5pm. 409 E. 5th at Neches (472-1903).

Texas Memorial Museum Dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the four-story museum and severl like it across Texas originally were built as permanent memorials to the state's centennial in 1936. Now part of the University of Texas, this natural-science museum is like a local version of the New York Museum of Natural History. Its collections of rocks, minerals, Texas wildlife, Indian artifacts and 30-foot-long fossil of a pre-historic lizard are of special interest to children. Hours: Mon–Fri 9am–5pm. Sat 10am–5pm. Sun 1–5pm. 2400 Trinity (471-1604).

the Laguna Gloria grounds.
May 17–Aug 10: "Tres Proyectos Latinos," curated by Kathy Vargas, Benito Huerta and Victor Zamudio, highlight Chicano and Latino artists from Houston, San Antonio and Austin.
3809 W. 35th (458-8191). Hours: Tues–Sat 10am–5pm & Sun 1–5pm.
Admission: $2 adults, $1 seniors & students, free for museum members & children under 12.

Dougherty Arts Center
The DAC gallery, part of a facility that offers a wide variety of classes in the arts, is operated by the Parks and Recreation Department through the City of Austin. The clean, spacious gallery is available to all artists and groups who meet DAC's review and selection process. As a result, the type and quality of exhibits vary widely.
May 2–May 28: Exhibition of works by Latino artists. Opening reception May 5, 6–8pm.
June 4–July 12: "Thirty-Something—African-American Artists Rediscovered" features work by local artists of color.
1110 Barton Springs Rd. (397-1455). Hours: Mon–Thurs 9am–9:30pm, Fri 9am–5:30pm & Sat 10am–2pm.

Flatbed Press
With one of the largest intaglio presses in the United States, Flatbed Press publishes museum-quality limited editions of original prints by nationally established and emerging artists. The small exhibit space, located in a converted downtown warehouse, showcases the work of fine printmakers from around the country.
April 15–May 24: "Past & Present" includes new and past works of UT professor and printmaker Ken Hale. Opening reception April 19, 6–8pm.
May 31–July 10: Color etchings by Chicago Art Institute professor Yvonne Leonard, who uses an innovative non-toxic water-based process for her work. Opening reception May 31, 6–8pm.
912 W. 3rd, accessible via Bowie or Baylor streets at 5th (477-9328). Hours: Mon–Fri 10am–5pm, Sat 10am–2pm & by appointment.


DAVENPORT (IOWA) MUSEUM OF ART

Austin Museum of Art Downtown
This large interim downtown space provides immediate opportunities to hold nationally recognized exhibitions while AMOA is executing a five-year strategic plan to build a world-class art museum.
April 26–July 20: "Masterworks of Haitian Art." A vibrant exhibition of colorful paintings and graceful metal sculpture, these 72 pieces from the Davenport Museum of Art were inspired by Walter E. Neiswanger, who started buying Haitian art in the early 1960s. His interest is easy to understand.

Once a prosperous slave colony, Haiti was isolated from the rest of the world after becoming a Black republic in 1804. The naive artistic tradition, long ignored in favor of portraiture mimicking Haiti's former colonial master, France, was not recognized until the founding of the Centre d'Art in 1944. Poor like most of Haiti, the artists used such simple materials as cornmeal and flattened oil drums to create their intricate designs. Both the paintings and sculpture in this exhibit are bold, primitive works of art that express a lush, tropical vitality and the influence of *Vodou*, Haiti's main religion, in everyday life.

Such first-generation artists as painter Rigaud Benoit and metal worker Georges Liautaud were inspired by *Vodou* imagery, which is woven throughout the bright paintings and monumental cut-out metal sculpture. We learn to our surprise that *Vodou* is not the "black magic" shown in Hollywood films but a nurturing religion that combines elements of ancestor worship, African spiritualism and European Catholicism.—*John Ferguson*

Related Events:
June 7: Artists about Art (Ruby Green, collector) 2pm.
Ongoing: *Divine Horsemen—The Living Gods of Haiti*, directed by Maya Deren, a groundbreaking, experimental American filmmaker who achieved international prominence during the late 1940s and 1950s. The 52-minute, b&w video journeys into the fascinating world of *Vodou* religion in Haiti. (Call for times and dates.)
823 Congress, ground floor (495-9224). Hours: Tues–Sat 11–7pm, Thurs open til 9pm & Sun 1–5pm. Admission: $3 adults, $2 seniors & students, free for museum members & children under 12. Thursdays $1.

Gallery at Shoal Creek
Established originally in 1965 as the G. Harvey Gallery, this spacious upscale gallery has undergone a variety of transformations over the years. It features the work of regionally and nationally recognized artists and emphasizes traditional representational, impressionistic imagery in oils, pastels, watercolors and bronzes.
May 31–June 18: New work by Karen Tual and Lyuba Titovets introduces the two artists to Austin. A native of France, Tual paints on gessoed panels, capturing the natural beauty of her home region near Nantes. Titovets, who emigrated to the United States from St. Petersburg four years ago, works primarily with water-based media to create rich, whimsical narratives on paper.
Reception for artists May 31, 2–4pm.
Summer 1997: Features works from all the gallery artists and spotlights Sante Fe artist Priscilla Hoback's clay tablets and monotype prints, Bob Guelich's oversized bronze animals and Mark Kluck's folk-art sculptures of carousel animals, whirligigs and weathervanes.
1500 W. 34th (454-6671). Hours: Tues–Fri 9am–5pm & Sat 10am–5pm.

Galería Sin Fronteras
Part of the cluster of galleries north of the Capitol, the gallery "without borders" focuses on con-

temporary Latino artwork by artists from all over the world. Pieces from its collection of original monoprints, etchings and lithographs—one of the largest bodies of artwork on paper—are exhibited periodically.

Through May 20: "*Mujeres Sin Fronteras*—Creating Their Own Lives: Women and Their Multiple Roles." Photographs of women in India, Vietnam, China, El Salvador, Mexico and Brazil, taken by Kellogg Fellow Leslye Orloff.

May 22–July: "Three Artists, Three Visions." Brought to Austin by San Antonio's Instituto Cultural Mexicano and Mexico's foreign ministry, this is an exhibit of expressionist paintings by Mexican artists trained in the United States and Europe: Nunik Sauret, Paul Birbil and Morgan Santander. Opening reception May 22, 5–8pm.

1701 Guadalupe (478-9448). Hours: Tues–Sat noon–6pm.

Graphic Concern

Nestled into a converted Victorian house in the West End shopping district, Graphic Concern for over 15 years has featured a select group of emerging Austin artists, working in a variety of media and styles.

May 24–June 14: Julia Cook Webber, a native Austinite, exhibits a group of small, colorfully whimsical watercolors. Opening reception May 24, 2–5pm.

Summer 1997: Work from over a dozen gallery regulars, including artists Will Klemm, Victoria Smith, Helmut Barnet, Teri Jonas and Cindy Streiff.

June (exact dates TBA): Central Texas pastels by emerging Austin artist Mike Etie.

July: show and dates TBA.

1202 W. 6th (472-7428). Hours: Mon–Sat 10am–5pm.

Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

As its name implies, the Humanities Research Center is devoted to scholarly investigations in the humanities. Main collections include major holdings in English literature from the 15th century to the present (Book Collection); Americana; and the history of architecture (Ben Weinreb Collection). The American Literary Manuscript Collection contains works by Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner and Lillian Hellman. The Film Collection includes the David O. Selznick Archive, which has significant holdings from such films as *Gone with the Wind* and *The Third Man*. The famous Gernsheim Collection of photographs contains works by such noted photographers as Ansel Adams, Walker Evans and Edward Steichen. Exhibitions from these holdings are staged on a regular basis. Permanent exhibits include the Gutenberg Bible, one of 21 two-volume sets of the Bible printed in 1450 on a printing press with moveable type; the first photograph, produced in 1826 by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce; and personal mementos ("Worldly Possessions") from various collections that include Gertrude Stein's pen and George Bernard Shaw's letter-opener.

Mar 3–June 27: "The Life and Films of Warren Skaaren, Screenwriter" features original scripts, photos and letters from Skaaren, the first director of the Texas Film Commission, who is best known for such hit films as *Top Gun, Batman* and *Beverly Hills Cop II*. 7th floor gallery, Mon–Fri 9am–4:30pm.

July 7–Oct 24: "Re-collecting: Photographs from the Ransom Center." This year's photographic exhibition is drawn from one of the nation's premier collections of photography and is a must-see for those interested in this art form. 7th floor gallery, Mon–Fri 9am–4:30pm.

21st & Guadalupe (471-7324). Hours: Mon–Sat 9–5pm & Sun 1–5pm.

Parking available for an hourly fee in the Dobie parking garage located at 21st and Whitis.

HUNTINGTON ART GALLERY – MICHENER COLLECTION

Archer M. Huntington Gallery

One of the top university museums in the nation, the Huntington has two exhibition areas on campus. The gallery space on the first and second floors of the Harry Ransom Center showcases selections from its many permanent collections, which include outstanding works of 19th and 20th century art (The Michener Collection and C.R. Smith Collection of Western American Art); contemporary Latin American paintings, prints and drawings; and exact reproductions of ancient Greek and Roman statues (the William J. Battle Collection of Plaster Casts, one of only a few U.S. collections). The Huntington also has a small collection of ancient Greek and Roman antiquities, a collection of European paintings as well as Medieval art on loan from the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

21st & Guadalupe (471-7324). Hours: Mon–Sat 9–5pm & Sun 1–5pm.

Parking available for an hourly fee in the Dobie parking garage, located at 21st and Whitis.

The second exhibition area inside the Fine Arts Building (near Memorial Stadium) houses an extensive print and drawing collection and displays eight to ten temporary exhibitions, including student and faculty shows, each year.

June 6–July 20: (Mezzanine) The Prints of Stuart Davis reflect the artist's progression toward the modern American master as we know him today. Producing mostly lithographs during the late 1920s and '30s in concentrated spurts of time, Davis worked in a naturalistic style, incorporating elements of Cubism and Surrealism.

June 6–July 20: (First Floor) "Snipers Nest: Art that has Lived with Lucy Lippard" features small works by contemporary artists as well as artists' books, posters, postcards and photographs accumulated during the last 30 years by the noted New

York art critic Lucy Lippard. With works from over 100 artists, including Judy Baca, Louise Bourgeois, Judy Chicago, Phillip Evergood, Eva Hesse, Sol LeWitt, Robert Rauschenberg, James Rosenquist, Nancy Spero and Michele Stuart, the exhibit incorporates Lippard's writings, which reflect her role as a critic, feminist, cultural worker, mother and activist in the American art scene.
23rd & San Jacinto (NE corner). Hours: Mon–Sat 9–5pm & Sun 1–5pm. Parking available for an hourly fee in the parking garage at 24th and San Jacinto.

Leeds Gallery
Tucked away on the 4th floor of the Flawn Academic Center, the Leeds Gallery is a satellite space for exhibiting selections from the Harry Ransom Center's enormous permanent collections.
Through Aug 15: "Confrontations—Portrait Drawings of Don Bachardy," a well-known native Californian artist, whose work has chronicled many artistic, literary, musical and cinematic personalities of the past four decades. The current exhibit consists of 40 portraits including Anaïs Nin, Tennessee Williams, Igor Stravinsky, Fred Astair, Elton John and Divine as well as manuscripts and photographs of these personalities on display.
Through Aug 15: "Sightings & Weather Prophets: The West Texas Landscape of Frank Reagh (1860–1945)." A Texas artist dedicated to visually documenting in oil and pastel paintings the vast unsettled regions of the Southwest as he experienced it. The exhibit traces nearly six decades of Reagh's influential career, during which his work won national and international acclaim.
Flawn Academic Center (just west of UT Main Tower) (471-7324). Hours: Mon–Fri 9am–4:30pm.

Lyons Matrix Gallery
Originally established in 1982 as a venue for glass arts, the gallery relocated downtown and broadened its focus in 1992, when it was bought by Camile Lyons. It now displays a wide variety of paintings and sculpture by established and emerging regional contemporary artists.
April 5–May 24: Austin artist Judy Jenson creates very unusual paintings, employing a complicated process of reverse painting on glass. Jenson combines symbolism, realism and a multitude of visual conventions to create ambitious, complex, well-crafted imagery. Claudia Reese, also an Austinite, exhibits new ceramic sculptures with Jenson's paintings. Reese, well known for her functional clay pottery with a savvy design sense, creates two distinct bodies of work for this show. Ceramic tile columns use the distinctively layered techniques usually found on her functional pieces. The three free-standing sculptures of monkeys are less recognizable, yet the works convey Reese's well-executed style.
June 7–July 26: "Jimmy Jalapeeno—New Paintings." A new show by one of Austin's best-known artists marks a return to his interest in landscapes. Also, North Carolina Glass Invitational, featuring glass sculptures by selected artists. Opening reception June 7, 6–8pm.
1712 Lavaca (479-0068). Hours: Mon–Fri 10am–5pm & Sat 10am–4pm.

HUNTINGTON ART GALLERY – MICHENER COLLECTION

Mexic-Arte Museum
With a commitment to preserving Latin American cultural traditions and promoting multicultural art, Mexic-Arte Museum, located in the heart of downtown Austin, rotates eight exhibits a year from its permanent collection among self-curated and touring exhibitions.
Mar 21–May 17: (Main Gallery) "Mexican Traditional Toys and Miniatures." Mexic-Arte is one of five museums nationwide to present this touring exhibition, which exemplifies the merging of indigenous and European cultures in Mexico during the past two centuries. Curated by Juan Coronel Rivera (the grandson of Diego Rivera) and Cristina Kahlo (the grandniece of Frida Kahlo), the exhibition contains over 400 toys and also includes several groups of photographs and prints of toys and the craft of the toymaker.
April 11–May 17: (Back Gallery) "Luz and the Good Teachers" is a combination of historic photos and drawings by Luz Jiménez, a model for Diego Rivera and others, whose life was changed by the Mexican Revolution.
May 30–July 5: (Main Gallery) Young Latino Artists. Second exhibit of the year supporting and promoting the work of 18- to 25-year-old Latino artists in the Austin community.
May 30–July 5: (Back Gallery) Dallas artist and poet Rosemary Meza exhibits a body of provocative work that deals with sexuality, gender and relationships. Meza's unconventional style combines drawings, painting and collage.
419 Congress (480-9373). Hours: Mon–Sat 10am–6pm. Admission varies.

Pro-Jex Gallery
Tucked into the historic corners of downtown retail spaces, this offbeat photo gallery and frame shop is easy to miss if you're not looking for it. Despite its limited space, Pro-Jex Gallery has been regularly exhibiting for 10 years the work of both emerging and established photographers.
May 3–May 31: "Botanica" features both b&w and color photos by 14 Texas photographers exploring botanical themes. The exhibit was co-curated by owner Neil Coleman and UT photography professor Dennis Darling.
June 7–July 2: Austin artist Martha Grenon exhibits her b&w photographs documenting

her travels to Albania. Opening reception June 7, 6–9pm.
109 E. 5th (472-7707). Hours: Mon–Fri 10am–6pm & Sat by appointment.

R. Peeples Jr. Gallery
This is a brand-new spacious gallery dedicated entirely to museum-quality studio furniture and decorative arts with unique artistic designs. The gallery's mission includes increasing public awareness of historical design influences and methods as they apply to contemporary studio crafts.
April 5–May 15: Inaugural exhibition with work by Dan Kagay, Matt Gordon, Beverly Penn, John Foster, Janice Smith, Michael Colca, Jim Keller, Claudia Mills and Robert Peeples Jr. All are established and recognized artists, and some are known regionally and nationally. Also included, "Simple Furniture," a solo exhibit of designs in wood and steel by Austin artist Dick Hedgepath.
1707 Guadalupe, first floor (457-1052). Hours: Wed–Sat 11am–6pm & by appointment.

Scanlan Gallery
Built three years ago as part of the Helms Fine Art Center at St. Stephen's School, Scanlan Gallery is a small but impressive space that has hosted a variety of noteworthy exhibitions over the past few years, including a number of solo shows by prominent Austin artists such as T. Paul Hernandez, Tre Arenz and Sydney Yeager. Gallery hours are contingent on school sessions, but any show can be viewed after hours by appointment. Currently on display through May 10 are color photos of Tuscany by UT photography professor Lawrence McFarland.
May 12–31: "Spartan Art." The annual student art show features a selection from the St. Stephen's student artists.
St. Stephen's Episcopal School, 2900 Bunny Run, off Loop 360 (327-1213). Hours: Mon–Fri 9am–4pm & weekends by appointment.

Stephen L. Clark Photography
For over 20 years owner Steve Clark has been promoting artists and musicians in various ways. With half the ground floor of a Victorian house near Treaty Oak and Whit Hanks, he began promoting and exhibiting fine art photography more than two years ago, with a focus on photographers from Texas and the Southwest, including Keith Carter, Mariana Yampolski, Ave Bonar, James Evans, Bill Wittliff and Randy Ehrlich. The gallery also has access to all national and regional photography.
Summer 1997: Selected works by gallery photographers.
1101 W. 6th (477-0828). Hours: Tues–Sat 10am–4pm & by appointment.

Tarrytown Gallery
Located in the upscale West Austin Tarrytown shopping center since 1988, Tarrytown Gallery regularly exhibits Central Texas artists and is dedicated to supporting and cultivating local talent. Although the gallery focuses on landscape-oriented imagery, it hosts a variety of shows with unique or unusual themes.
May 3–July 19: A group of regular gallery artists, including Dianne Grammer, Roi James, Gordon Fowler, Margie Crisp, Stacy Erickson, Julie Speed, Wanda Gamble and Glenn Whitehead, exhibit new work in a variety of styles and media (no opening reception).
July 26–Aug 30: A one-man show by Roi James, whose subjects include figures, landscapes and still life, works in an "old world" style using multiple glazes and heavy chiaroscuro. Opening reception July 26, 7–9pm.
2414 Exposition, Ste. B-110 (473-2552). Hours: Mon–Fri 9am–5:30pm & Sat 10am–4pm.

Women & Their Work Gallery
For nearly 20 years this nonprofit arts organization has sponsored, organized and hosted a variety of arts-related events. In its new home for two years, the gallery is a vital presence in the emerging arts district just south of the UT campus.
May 8–17: "Annual Red Dot Sale," a fund-raising event that features small works, all priced below $500, donated by artists throughout Texas. A great opportunity to collect the work of well-known artists at affordable prices. Reception and sale May 8, 6–8pm. Admission $15.
May 29–July 1: Regina Vater, an installation artist, has created a site-specific body of work for this exhibition space that includes a video component. Opening reception May 29, 6–8pm with gallery talk at 6:30pm by the artist.
July 10–Aug 16: Annette Lawrence's drawings on paper, on the walls and in rock on the floor use simple materials and markings to create visual complexity and generate multiple meanings. Lawrence, who lives in Denton and teaches at the Univeristy of North Texas, has exhibited nationally in galleries and museums and currently is featured in the 1997 Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. Public gallery lecture July 10, 6:30pm.
1710 Lavaca (477-1064). Hours: Mon–Fri 10am–5pm & Sat noon–4pm.

Yard Dog
Located in a laid-back arts-and-antiques retail section of South Congress, Yard Dog exclusively exhibits folk art—non-mainstream, visionary and outsider art of the American South.
April 16–May 18: A two-person show featuring paintings by Willie Jinks and Artist Chuckie. Jinks, a retired sanitation worker in Atlanta, depicts himself playfully in a variety of situations and includes descriptive text within the paintings. Chuckie, who lives in Shreveport, La., paints mostly black musicians and athletes.
May 24–June 22: Pervis Young, a well-known outsider artist from Miami, creates spiritual and erotic images depicting the Black experience in America. Opening reception May 24, 7–9pm.
July: exhibition and dates TBA.
1510 S. Congress (912-1613). Hours: Wed–Sun 11am–6pm & by appointment.
1510 S. Congress (912-1613). Hours: Wed–Sun 11am–6pm & by appointment.

On the Town

Edited by Mary Beth Gradziel

Music

The Old School Dinner Concerts informally present music and other entertainment in a restored 1876 Victorian mansion. **May 17**: Singer/Songwriter Open Mike; **June 14**: Emily Kaitz and Mary Reynolds. Reservations only. 1604 E. 11th (477-8819). Call for ticket price.

The New Texas Festival celebrates classical music with visiting singers, concerts and other events all over town. Other activities include lectures, classes, performances and a surprise birthday celebration with venues, times and prices TBA, **June 8–15** (476-5775). The Conspirare Choir performs "The Tears of St. Peter" by Lassus and other selections of newly arranged music, 8pm **June 8** Carillion, 2630 Exposition, $15. Vern Sutton and Keith Weber perform an eclectic selection of American songs, from opera to opry, 8:15pm **June 9** Jessen Auditorium, 22nd and Speedway, $10. The Conspirare Choir sings "Rachmaninoff Vespers" 10pm **June 12** Carillion, $10. A musical setting of Dr. Seuss' *Green Eggs and Ham* for children will be 10am **June 13**, venue TBA, $5.

One of the great pianists of our time, Van Cliburn makes a very rare appearance with the Austin Symphony, 8pm **May 24** UT Bass Concert Hall, 23rd and E. Campus Dr. (477-6060). Tickets $30–50.

DAN GONZALEZ

The prestigious Dorian Quintet opens the 15th annual **Austin Chamber Music Society Summer Music Workshop and Festival**, held in locations all over town **June 1–14** (454-7562). Classes are 8:45am–5:45pm and 5:30–7pm **June 2–14** First Unitarian Church, 4700 Grover. Faculty guests include the Maia Quartet in residence the first week and Christel Opp, director of Die Jungen Further Streichholzer from Furth, Germany. Performers include **June 1**: Dorian Wind Quintet, 7:30pm, St. Mary's Cathedral, 10th and Brazos; **June 5**: Maia Quartet, 7:30pm, National Wildflower Research Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave.; **June 6**: frequent guest of the Austin Symphony, violinist Corey Cerovsek, 7:30pm, First Unitarian Church, 4700 Grover; **June 8**: Metropolitan Opera diva Gilda Cruz-Romo, 4pm, Mexic-Arte Museum, 5th and Congress; **June 10**: an Evening of Russian Music by workshop faculty, 7:30pm, First Unitarian Church; **June 12**: James Polk Jazz Quartet, 7:30pm, St. James Episcopal Church, 3701 E. MLK; **June 14**: Gala Viennese Evening with artists from the Chamber Music Center and Austin Lyric Opera, 7:30pm, Helms Fine Arts Center, St. Stephen's School, 2900 Bunny Run. Prices TBA (454-TIXS).

Bring a picnic and loosen that tie for the Austin Symphony Promenade Pops, featuring Deborah Henson-Conant, jazz harpist, who won hearts here last summer with the Boston Pops, 8pm **June 6–8** Palmer Auditorium, S. 1st Street and Riverside (476-6064). Tickets (on sale May 27) $15–25.
The **Cactus Pear Music Festival** is an engaging week of chamber music and related events, **July 5–12**, spread over three cities—San Antonio, Austin and Nuevo Laredo—and organized by San Antonio Symphony concertmaster Stephanie Sant'Ambrogio with pianist Jeffrey Sykes and 14 other artists. The peripatetic festival moves to Austin 7:30pm **July 11 with** "The Joy of Sextets," with music by Beethoven, Brahms and others. Jessen Auditorium, 21st and Speedway (477-6060). Tickets $12 individually, $20 for both days and discounts for seniors and students.

Dance

The premiere of an original ballet by Lambros Lambrou, **Lady of the Camellias**, by the Austin Ballet was inspired by the movie *Camille* and features Nadya Zybine as guest artist, **May 9–11** (8pm Fri & Sat, 2pm Sun) UT Bass Concert Hall, 23rd & E. Campus Dr. (476-9051). Tickets $10–33.

Theater

Jack and Jill, a praiseworthy new drama by Jane Martin, dramatizing the birth, life, death and rebirth of a relationship between a man and a woman, premieres 8pm (2:30pm Sun) **April 26–May 31** Zachary Scott Theatre, 1510 Toomey (476-0541). Tickets $15–20.

The DownStage Players start a continuing series of play/episodes about industrial espionage, **Flame Failure: The Silent War**, the last two weekends of every month. Written by Dan Bonfitto, the series runs for 12 months. **May 23–June 1**: Firebox (episode 1); **June 20–29**: Hay in a Needlestack (episode 2); **July 18–27**: Declaration of Noise (episode 3). Curtain time is 11pm Fri & Sat, 8pm Sun. The Public Domain Theater, 807 Congress (474-6202). Tickets $5 at the door, reservations for next production only.

Fresh from a successful run in New York, Steve Martin's **Picasso at the Lapin Agile**, with a local cast, suggests Picasso met Einstein at a French bar before either one was famous, **through June 1**. Wed–Sat 8pm, Sun 6pm. Live Oak Theater, 719 Congress (472-5143). Tickets $16 & $18.

Outdoors

The annual **Zilker Park Bluegrass Festival** on Mother's Day showcases a dozen Texas bluegrass bands in addition to offering workshops, family activities and food, **May 10** Zilker Hillside Theatre, across from Barton Springs Pool (218-1567). Free.

More than 200 selected artists, colorful decorations and plenty of food and entertainment are featured one weekend a year in May at **Fiesta Laguna Gloria**, on the lakeside grounds of Laguna Gloria, 3809 W. 38th (347-1997). 11am–5pm **May 17** and 12–5pm **May 18**. Adults $6, children $4, children age 5 and under free.

The Austin Yacht Club sponsors a popular long-distance race **May**

24–25
known as
Turnback Canyon.
The two-day event, with overnight camping, is a spirited 34-mile run from Lake Travis to Lago Vista and back. To enter, call Leo Anderson at 250-8745. The best views are from the upper reaches of Lake Travis.

Outdoor Summer Concert Series are free summertime concerts in June and July at Auditorium Shores on Town Lake, featuring two bands each **Wednesday** evening. Show starts around 7pm and lasts until 10:30–11pm. Tentative lineup **May 14**: The Patti David Band/The Don McCalister Band; **May 21**: Majestics/Rotel and the Hot Tomatoes; **May 28**: Jim Talbot Band/Lee Person Band; **June 4**: Maryann Price and Will Taylor Quartet/Beto y Los Fairlanes; **June 11**: The Keepers, Jake Andrews and Tommy Taylor/Jon Blondell; **June 18**: Suzanna Sharpe and the Samba Police/Memphis Train; **June 25**: Double O Soul/Los Jazz Vatos; **July 2**: Time Travelers/Newmatics, all sponsored by the Austin Federation of Musicians and the City of Austin.

Bring a picnic and the family to the popular, free **Sunday afternoon concerts** at 3pm during **June** and **July** at Zilker Hillside Theatre, across the parking lot from Barton Springs Pool, sponsored by the Austin Federation of Musicians and the City of Austin. Limited parking.

The Pierce Arrows and Duesenbergs of the boating world—sleek mahogany speedboats of the 1930s, '40s and '50s—gather from around the state at the **Wooden Boat Show**, 9am–2pm **June 1** at Oyster Landing. The annual event, which is free to the public, moved from Lake Travis about four years ago, takes place at the docks between the Hula Hut and Lakeview Lodge. The show closes with an awards ceremony and a parade up the lake. 3826 Lake Austin Blvd.

For nine years the Arboretum has staged free summer blues and jazz concerts outdoors at 7pm on **Wednesdays** in a popular series called **Blues on the Green**. This year's lineup features local performers and national touring acts: **June 11**: Guy Forsyth; **June 25**: The Brew; **July 9**: Toby Anderson; **July 23**: Omar and The Howlers; **Aug 6**: Forlini and Cross; **Aug 20**: 8-1/2 Souvenirs. 10000 Research (338-4437). In case of rain, the concert is rescheduled within two weeks.

A popular tradition for more than 20 years, the Austin Symphony plays such favorites as Sousa, Gershwin and Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture," complete with cannon fire, outdoors under the stars at Auditorium Shores **July 4**. Although the music starts at dusk, the free concert draws thousands of people ahead of time to Town Lake to stake out good views or have an evening picnic dinner with family and friends. The 15-minute post-concert fireworks show, visible all over town, is always a grand finale.

In late June and early July the Austin Yacht Club holds its annual **Governor's Cup Regatta**, which got its name for no other reason than the club hoped the state govenor would show up for the event. Once part of Aquafest, the popular centerboard race was created in the 1960s to promote Central Texas lakes. The less-than-stuffy event features an "incredibly ugly" trophy, bought from a flea market on Red River, that is awarded to an out-of-town club that brings in the most participants. Although many have been invited, only one Texas Govenor has attended: Mark White. Besides the distinction as the only governor to attend the race, White, a sailor, was thrown in the swimming pool, a tradition, now abondoned, that was reserved for the winner. The centerboard regatta, **June 28–29**, corresponds with the Coronado 15, a national championship held on Lake Travis at the same time. But the best known race is **July 5–6**, which features the colorful spinnakers of a keel fleet. Good viewing spots are the Volenter Beach Club, Mansfield Dam, Windy Point and The Oasis.

Ongoing

Wander through historic Austin with self-guided tour brochures of the Bremond Block, Congress Avenue, East 6th Street, Hyde Park and the scenic Texas State Cemetery, available at the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau, 201 E. 2nd (478-0098), and the Austin History Center, 810 Guadalupe (499-7480). Or show up at the southern entrance of the Capitol for a free, informative guided tour every weekend and on holidays **March 1** through the end of **November** (weather permitting). Congress Avenue & E. 6th Street: 9am **Thur, Fri & Sat** & 2pm **Sun**; Bremond Block: 11am **Sat & Sun**; Capitol grounds: 2pm **Sat** & 9am **Sun**. Call in advance if you bring a large group.

Live music really is a way of life in Austin! Bluegrass musicians jam **Sundays** 2–8:30pm at Artz Rib House, 2330 S. Lamar (442-8283) and 7pm **Fridays** at Manchaca Fire Station (282-3600). No cover.

Catch Christine Albert, one of Austin's premiere singer/songwriters, when she joins guitarist/vocalist Chris Gage in the band Boxcars from 9pm–1am on the **2nd, 4th & 5th Mondays of each month** at Don's Depot, 600 W. 6th (478-0336). No cover.

Local award-winning singer/songwriter Sarah Elizabeth Campbell and special guests are hosts of **Bummer Nights**, featuring a repertoire of sad songs and humorous patter, 7:30–9:30pm on **Mondays** at Artz Rib House, 2330 S. Lamar (442-8283). No cover.

Celtic/Irish jam sessions are 8–10pm **Mondays** and **Wednesdays** at the Draught Horse Pub & Brewery, 4112 Medical Parkway (452-6258), and 8pm **Saturdays** at Señor O'Brien's Cafe, 624 W. 34th (451-9665). No cover.

Join in or just listen to Texas Old-Time Fiddlers 7:30–9:30pm every **Tuesday** at Artz Rib House, 2330 S. Lamar (442-8283). No cover.

Noted local chanteuse Toni Price sings the blues during **hippie hour**, 6:30–9pm on **Tuesdays** at the Continental Club, 1315 S. Congress (441-2444). No cover.

Enjoy Southern-style home cooking and the lively music of Champ Hood & the Threadgill Troubadours every **Monday** evening starting around 6:30pm at Threadgill's World Headquarters, 301 W. Riverside (472-9304), and on **Wednesdays** at Threadgill's Restaurant, 6416 N. Lamar (451-5440). No cover.

Much like house concerts, the **Songwriters Celebration** will feature musicians 7–9pm **Wednesdays through May** at Hostels International Austin, the local hostel for travelers. **May 7**: Austin's own nationally known Betty Elders; **May 14**: Nashville's Joseph & Theresa Brunelle; **May 21**: Canadian Lowry Olafson. 2200 S. Lakeshore Blvd (444-2294). Donation.

The Jazz Pharaohs play classic toe-tappin' New Orleans–style classics 6–8pm on **Wednesdays** (no cover) and on **Fridays** ($4 cover) at the Elephant Room, 315 Congress (473-2279) as well as 9–midnight (50¢ surcharge) every **Thursday** night at Jazz Louisiana Kitchen, 212 E. 6th (479-0474).

For more than 15 years, the Central Presbyterian Church has staged a free **Noonday Concert Series** on **Thursdays** that is a treat for those working downtown. Mostly classical chamber music, the concerts start at 12:05pm and last about 30 minutes, and you may bring your lunch or buy homemade sandwiches and soup for $3. **May 1**: Anthony Morris (classical guitar); **May 8**: Mary Schani (clarinet) and Elden Little (piano); **May 15**: Kohler and Greenwalt (European cabaret songs); **May 22**: Motets and Madrigals; **May 29**: Tina Arrowood (*Songs from the Heart*); **June 5**: Austin Chamber Music Festival; **June 12**: Austin Chamber Music Center Summer Workshop; **June 19**: Will Taylor and Friends; **June 26**: Nova Saxophone Quartet. 8th and Brazos (472-2445). Free.

Steve Brooks and Glenn Alyn host **Hyde Park Unplugged**, a musical variety show with an emphasis on talented singer/songwriters, 7–9pm **Thursdays** at Joel T's Cafe, 4101 Guadalupe (453-8482). Donation.

Shady Grove is the spot for **Unplugged at the Grove**, live music outdoors under the pecan grove 8–10pm every **Thursday** May through August, 1624 Barton Springs (474-9991). No cover.

The Dog & Duck Pub features Scottish pipes and drums by the Silver Thistle at outdoor sessions 7:30–9pm **Fridays** 406 W. 17th (479-0598). No cover.

Later at the Live Oak features after-the-theater cabaret shows with a little bit of everything—big band, swing, gospel and jazz—from around 10:30pm–1am **Saturdays** at the Live Oak Theater, 719 Congress (472-5143). Coming in **May** are Joe York, Judy Arnold, Tim Curry and more. $5 cover.

National stars and local folksingers share the stage at UT's Cactus Cafe in the Student Union with an open mike on **Mondays** and a weekend lineup of musicians. Tickets go on sale at 8:15pm for the 9pm show, with no advance sales. **May 2–3**: Jimmie Dale Gilmore; **May 9**: 8-1/2 Souvenirs; **May 10**: Jimmy LaFave; **May 13**: Shake Russell and Dana Cooper. The club is closed May 14–31. **June 10**: Lucy Kaplansky; **June 11**: Tom Russell. 24th and Guadalupe (475-6515). Tickets $11.50.

Film

The **Paramount Theatre**'s popular **Summer Film Classics** series begins the first week of June with a lineup of timeless double features. 713 Congress (472-2901). Call for showtimes, details and ticket prices.

June 3–5: Humphrey Bogart's best-known films, *Casablanca* and *The African Queen*, for which Bogey

won an Oscar. **June 6–8**: Lauren Bacall teaches Bogey how to whistle in *The Big Sleep*. June 10–11: The wise-cracking, danger-loving couple of William Powell and Myrna Loy appear in *The Thin Man* and *After the Thin Man*. **June 12–13**: Elizabeth Taylor takes the spotlight in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. **June 14–15**: A double feature of urban thrillers, Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (with a young Robert De Niro) and Sidney Lumet's *Dog Day Afternoon* (with a younger Al Pacino). **June 17–18**: Cary Grant and Katherine Hepburn are paired up in two great screwball comedies, *Holiday* and *Philadelphia Story*. **June 19–20**: Audrey Hepburn is featured in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *Funny Face*. June 21–22: Heartthrob Tom Cruise takes the screen in *Top Gun* and Rebecca de Mornay in *Risky Business*. **June 24 –25**: Dancing at its best can be seen in *Swing Time*, featuring Fred Astaire, and *On the Town*, with Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra. **June 26–27**: More music will be featured in *Jailhouse Rock*, perhaps Elvis Presley's best movie, and *Bye, Bye, Birdie*, the Elvis impersonation story that launched the career of Ann-Margret. **June 28–29**: More dancing hits the screen with Bob Fosse films *Cabaret* and the autobiographical *All that Jazz*, with a fine performance by Roy Scheider.

July 1–2: The Brönte sisters get the cinematic treatment with Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, featuring Joan Fontaine and Orson Welles, and Emily's *Wuthering Heights*, with Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon. **July 3–5**: Two great westerns: *Shane*, with Alan Ladd and Jack Palance, and *High Noon*, the classic showdown with Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly. **July 6**: *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, Sergio Leone's ultimate spaghetti western featuring Clint Eastwood. **July 8–9**: A batch of science fiction films take over the theater, beginning with alien invaders in *War of the Worlds* and an alien savior in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. **July 10–11**: Jane Fonda camps it up in *Barbarella* along with Zsa Zsa Gabor in *Queen of Outer Space*. **July 14–15**: The director's cut of *Blade Runner*, a brooding futuristic flick with Harrison Ford, will be shown along with Stanley Kubrick's disturbing *A Clockwork Orange*. **July 15–16**: A week-long tribute to Alfred Hitchcock starts with *The 39 Steps* and *The Lady Vanishes*, two of his finest English films. **July 17–18**: Joseph Cotten is a benevolent uncle with a secret in *Shadow of a Doubt*, and Jimmy Stewart unravels a mystery in *Rope*. **July 19–20**: Hitchcock at his dizzying best in this re-release of *Vertigo* and *North by Northwest*. **July 22–23**: Frank Capra salutes the common man in *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. **July 24–25**: Ham it up with two more screwball comedies starring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert in *It Happened One Night* and Jimmy Stewart and Jean Arthur in *You Can't Take It With You*.

The **Texas Union Theater** presents a wide variety of contemporary and classic, foreign and domestic films. Located on the UT campus in the Union building at 26th Street and Guadalupe (475-6666). Call for showtimes, details and ticket prices.

May 16–18: *Lone Star*, independent filmmaker John Sayles' tale of murder and mystery along the Texas-Mexico border. The theater will be closed through June 12 but reopens with a special screening of Theo Angelopoulos' *Ulysses' Gaze*. The film, starring Harvey Keitel, won the Grand Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1995. Other summer films are TBA.

DAN GONZALEZ

The **Austin Film Society**, a nonprofit organization, shows some of the best works of cinema's 100-year history at the Dobie Theater, Texas Union Theater on the UT campus and at the Paramount. Call 322-0145 for a complete schedule of films, showtimes, details and ticket prices.

This summer, the group presents the latest installment in its ongoing *film noir* series, "Femmes Fatales and Other Bad Women," beginning **May 14** at the Dobie Theater. Scheduled films include Billy Wilder's classic *Sunset Boulevard*, Francois Truffaut's *The Bride Wore Black* and *The Lady in the Lake*, which features Robert Montgomery directing himself as Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe.

Also scheduled is a "Free-for-All Cinema" series, a diverse group of films with no unifying theme except "all selections represent great cinema." Featured films: a pair of B westerns from Budd Boetticher, *Comanche Station* and *Buchanan Rides Alone*; Nicholas Ray's musical *Hot Blood*; Terry Malick's *Badlands*; a pair of films by Russia's controversial Andrei Tarkovsky, *Andrei Rublev* and *Nostalgia*; and Truffaut's *The Story of Adele H.*

A Saturday children's film series at the Paramount is in the works.

Etcetera

Named after London's prestigious address, Hyde Park—Austin's oldest residential neighborhood—was the elite address at the turn of the century. Today the gingerbread houses and eclectic bungalows are once again some of the city's most prized homes, and the neighborhood is listed in the National Register for Historic Places. Now in its 21st year, the **Hyde Park Homes Tour** highlights nine new and renovated houses from 1–6pm **June 14–15**. Advance tickets are available at a discount from Avenue B Grocery and other sites. Child care available on June 15 by reservation (453-7765). Call 452-2815 for general tour information. Between 40th and 43rd streets & avenues B & H. Tickets $8.

The French celebrate **Bastille Day** to mark the event that led to the overthrow of the monarchy more than 200 years ago. Around that time Alliance Française holds its annual fund raiser, this year on the grounds of the French Legation 3–9pm **July 13**. Festivities include French food and wine from Jean-Luc's French Bistro and La Madeleine, various children's activities, fencing demonstrations and music at 6pm by 8-1/2 Souvenirs. Despite the heat last year, almost 1,000 people turned out for this annual affaire. 802 San Marcos at E. 7th (472-8180 and 451-1704). Tickets $4–5.

Kidstuff

Children's Day Art Park, sponsored by the Austin Symphony, features live performances in June and July by some of the area's most popular musicians, an instrumental petting zoo and one-on-one visits with members of the Austin Symphony Orchestra. After the show, children and parents may follow the Pied Piper down the Lemonade Trail to the Art Tent, where local artisans help children create items to take home. Bring a picnic lunch. Wednesday mornings 9:30am–noon **June 4–July 30**. Symphony Square, 1101 Red River (476-6064). Admission: 50¢ per child, adults free when accompanied by a child. Professional animal trainers, marvelous animals, Chinese acrobats and a woman shot from the world's largest crossbow are part of the "Greatest Show on Earth" at the annual Ringling Bros. and Barnham & Bailey Circus, **June 5–8**, Frank Erwin Center (477-6060). Ticket prices Thurs: $5.50, $7.50, $11.50; Fri, Sat & Sun: $24.50. $10.50, 12.60. $16.50 and $24.50 ($3 discount for children 12 & under for Sat morning show).

Pioneer Farm, once part of a large cotton plantation, is an outdoor museum of rural life as it was 100 years ago. Various programs and classes during the week and on Sundays are designed for children of all ages. The popular summer day camps fill up quickly with advance registration. Other than scheduled times, the farm is open by reservation only. **June 8**: planting sweet potatoes; **June 15**: leather working; **June 22**: milking a cow; **June 29**: making jam with wild grapes and other fruits; **July 6**: games of the pioneers; **July 13**: making relishes and sauces; **July 20**: tour of hidden treasures; **July 27**: lace-making, embroidery and cross-stitching. Hours: Sun 1–5pm; Mon–Wed 9:30am–1pm (through May); Mon–Thurs 9:30am–3pm (June–Aug). Closed Saturdays. 11418 Sprinkle Cut-Off Road (837-1215). Admission: $3 adults, $2 children 3–12.

Austin Children's Museum features "Inside the Looking Lens," an introduction to and history of photography, **through the summer**. Along with its other activities, this interactive exhibit has a gigantic *camera obscura* that shows you how the camera lens turns an image upside down before it reaches the film. **June 2**: Literacy through Photography. Photographs taken by Austin-area school schildren over the past five months. Hours: Tues–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun noon–5pm. The museum closes from late August through September 28 as it moves to a new downtown location this fall. 1501 W. 5th, Ste. 108 (472-2494). Admission: $2.50.

Nature

Howie Richey, the Texas Back Roads Scholar, writes about some of the area's unique natural areas. He leads nature tours and every Saturday broadcasts the "Eco-Calendar" on KUT-FM.

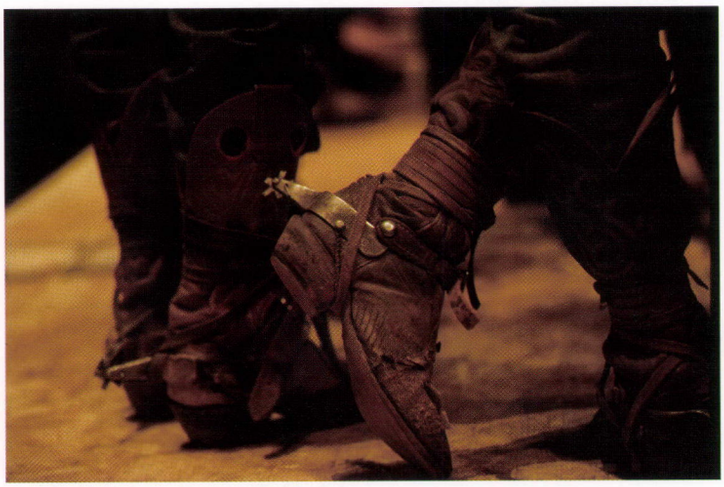
Zilker Metropolitan Park
If visitors have only three hours to

spend in Austin, take them to Barton Springs, a premier natural oasis in the heart of the city. Many long-time Austinites remember the springs by name, called Parthenia (the big'n in the pool), Eliza (Elks' Club enclosure) and Zenobia (downstream of the dam) for Billy Barton's three daughters. More than 26 million gallons of 68-degree water flow through the pool daily. Also in this park complex are the Natural Science Center, with its wilderness trail and animal exhibits, the Trail of Trees and the extensive greenbelt, which follows the creek upstream beyond Loop 360. So close in, it's difficult to believe the park-preserve arrangement is surrounded by so much urbanization. Barton Springs Pool, 2100 Barton Springs Rd. (867-3080). Hours: 5 am–10pm (except Wednesdays & Thursdays). Admission: $0.50–2.75. Austin Area Garden Center, 2220 Barton Springs (477-8672). Hours: 7:30am–7:30pm daily. Free. Natural Science Center, west end Zilker Park (327-8181). Hours: 9am–5pm Mon–Sat, Sun noon–5pm. Donation.

Mount Bonnell Area
An interesting contrast to Zilker is the top of this famous city high point, with its great sunrises, sunsets and lake views (but not the Capitol). Here you can behold the city skyline, hills to the west and flatter prairies to the east. The breezy hilltop is often the site of weddings and meditations. On your way back down, stop in at Laguna Gloria, a branch of the Austin Museum of Art, with its spacious grounds and Mediterranean-style villa (formerly the home of Clara Driscoll, savior of the Alamo). Then take a short hike through Mayfield Preserve, once a private residence, and say hello to the peacocks and rock ponds, which the Mayfields built themselves. Mount Bonnell, 3800 Mt. Bonnell Dr. (327-8181). Laguna Gloria, 3809 W. 35th (458-8191). Mayfield Park & Preserve, 3505 W. 35th (327-5437). All free.

Lost Pines
Go east to experience the Post Oak Savannah, a transition area between the prairies and the forests, and the Lost Pines therein. This island of leftover pines, vestiges of a cooler climate, is like deep East Texas, an anomaly for this area. It surrounds two lovely state parks, which are connected by a winding road. Bastrop State Park is known for its comfortable log cabins, which are reserved through the Texas Parks and Wildlife central reservations (800/792-1112). Buescher State Park has overnight camping facilities with picnic tables, hot showers and other amenities. Bastrop State Park, Texas Hwy. 71 E of Bastrop (512/321-2101). Buescher State Park, off Texas Hwy. 71 N of Smithville (512/237-2241).

Pilot Knob Area
In the shadow of the only extinct volcano around Austin, two public parks straddle Onion Creek, far from its origins near Henly, some 40 miles away. At McKinney Falls, it's as if the creek, reluctant to leave the Hill Country behind, draws it down to this transition zone bordering the Blackland Prairie. Named for an early settler, this is where Williamson Creek feeds into Onion Creek. Two waterfalls, shady banks and semi-deep water make this a refreshing summertime swimming hole as well as a pleasant overnight camp. Moya Park, with its flatter terrain, is more developed. An especially interesting feature in this park, three miles downstream, is the historic one-lane iron bridge, which once spanned the Colorado River in the 1880s as a toll bridge. Pilot Knob, a low-lying volcano millions of years old, earned its name from airplane pilots, who used it as a guidepost to Bergstrom airbase. McKinney Falls State Park, off U.S. Hwy. 183S (243-1643). Admission: $2 adult. Richard Moya County Park, one mile east of Burleson & U.S. Hwy. 183S (473-9437). Free (day use only).


COLES HAIRSTON

Bull Creek Valley
The steep canyon walls of Bull Creek define the greenbelt and Forest Ridge Preserve near Loop 360. One of the largest preserves in the Austin system, Forest Ridge is part of the Balcones Canyonlands conservation area. It is known for an extensive trail system, hilltop views and abundant birds as well as the connecting trail that meanders through the greenbelt along the creek. But the park's convenient location means lots of road noise. Following the creek below Loop 360 is a picnic, wading and swimming area along Lakewood Drive, which is often closed due to high water. Bull Creek Greenbelt, along Loop 360 S of Spicewood Springs Rd. (346-8705). Bull Creek District Park, on Lakewood Drive. Forest Ridge Preserve, 8000 N. Capital of Texas Hwy. (327-5478). All free (day use only).

Hamilton Pool-Westcave Preserve
Hamilton Pool, named for a former governor of Texas, is an awe-inspiring shelf of limestone with a 30-foot waterfall that empties into an inviting swimming hole. Now a county park, the preserve has an extensive creekside trail that leads under towering cypress trees to the Pedernales River. Down the road and across the Pedernales is Westcave Preserve, an extremely fragile area, distinctive for its blending of two ecosystems and accessible only by guided tours Saturdays and Sundays. Tours start at 10am, noon, 2pm and 4pm (210/825-3442). Donation. Hamilton Pool County Park, Texas Hwy. 71W to Hamilton Pool Road (264-2740). Admission: $3 (day use only).

National Wildflower Research Center-Veloway
You'll learn more about native plants in one hour at this national native-plant center than you could in a month on your own. Founded by Lady Bird Johnson, whose vision of beautiful highways led to an appreciation of wildflowers and native flora, the center has festivals, exhibits, workshops, children's activities and demonstration gardens as well as a gift shop and cafe, which are open year round. Don't forget to see the impressive rainwater-collection system disguised as an observation tower. Down the street, the nearby Veloway, a paved, 3.1-mile trail for non-motorized wheeled vehicles, gracefully winds along Slaughter Creek, whose streamflow winds up in Barton Springs. Helmet required. National Wildflower Research Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave. (292-4100). Admission: $3–$5. Veloway (480-3032). Free.

Road Trips

Burnet

The **Vanishing Texas River Cruise** shows you some of the best Hill Country views around in the comfort of a double-decker boat that explores the upper reaches of Lake Buchanan, the first in the chain of Highland Lakes. Mostly wilderness, the scenery includes three waterfalls, many canyons and steep cliffs along with an assortment of hawks, herons and other wildlife. Bald eagles spend the winter here. Bring a camera, plenty of film and your own lunch for this 2-1/2-hour tour, which starts at 11am every day except Tuesday. With advance notice, box lunches are available for $5.25. Reservations required. 13-1/2 miles up RR 2341 off Texas Hwy. 29 from Burnet (512/756-6986). $15 adult, $13 ages 13–18, $10 6–12.

Dale

An educational as well as fun activity for some children is picking blackberries, and William McKemie opens his farm every May and June to the public of all ages to fill up five-quart boxes for $6. The best season for berries is about two to three weeks after the farm opens May 24. McKemie's Home Grown is one mile from Dale (Caldwell County) on County Road 165, but it's best to call for directions (512/764-2122).

Fort Worth

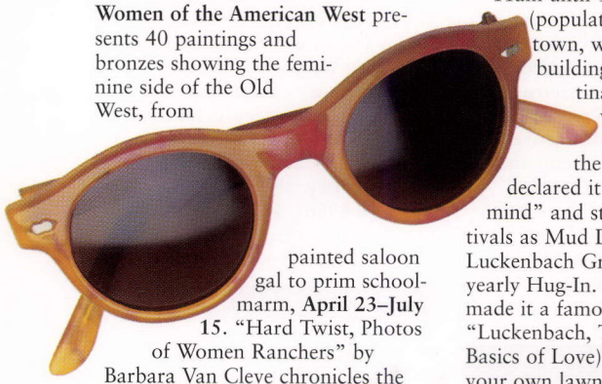
Black Dignity showcases over 60 portrait photographs of African Americans made from the Everhard Collection, negatives from several photographers' studios in Leavenworth, Kan., from the 1870s–1940s. The images depict the community's leading figures and ordinary citizens, whose faces testify to the historic events they witnessed. "Masterworks of the Photography Collection" offers 30 beautiful, unusual and interesting photographs, **through May 11**. "The Daguerreotype Art of Thomas M. Easterly," ground-breaking work from the mid-1840s through the 1870s, is on display **through June 1**. Hours: Tues–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun noon–5pm. Amon Carter Museum, 3501 Camp Bowie (817/738-1933 or cartermuseum.org). Free.

The prestigious 10th **Van Cliburn International Piano Competition**, held every four years, showcases the talents of 35 of the world's finest pianists chosen to compete in the final rounds, **May 23–June 8**, Landreth Auditorium, Texas Christian University (817/736536).

Georgetown

The huge underground rooms and formations of **Inner Space Caverns**, carved out by the Edwards Aquifer, are a cool retreat from the heat in nearby Georgetown and one of the best public caves in the state. Guided tours leave every half hour and last about an hour. During the week is a discovery tour for elementary children. Hours: daily 10am–4:50pm. One mile south of Georgetown on I-35 (512/756-6976). Admission: $8 adults, $5 children ages 4–12.

Hill Country



Women of the American West presents 40 paintings and bronzes showing the feminine side of the Old West, from painted saloon gal to prim schoolmarm, **April 23–July 15**. "Hard Twist, Photos of Women Ranchers" by Barbara Van Cleve chronicles the lives of 20 contemporary ranch women at home on the range, **May 12–July 15**. Hours: 9am–5pm Mon–Sat, Sun 1–5pm. Cowboy Artists of America Museum, 1550 Bandera Hwy., Kerrville (210/896-2553). Admission: $3 adults, $2.50 seniors and $1 students.

The legendary **Kerrville Folk Festival** is one of the nation's top live music festivals, featuring national and international performers for 18 days, 24-hours a day on a rural ranch. Main Stage evening performances and afternoon children's entertainment at Threadgill Stage every weekend. Weeknight performances at Threadgill Stage. All-night campfire jams. This year's lineup includes Peter Yarrow, Tish Hinojosa, Tom Paxton and a Shake Russell/Dana Cooper reunion. **May 22–June 8**. New Folk Concerts **May 24–25 & June 1**. Folk Mass Services **May 25, June 1 & 8**. Songwriter Schools **May 27–29 & June 2–4**. Booking & Management Seminar **June 2–4**. What Men Don't Know Conference **June 5**, Quiet Valley Ranch, 9 miles south of Kerrville on Hwy. 16 (800/435-8429). Daily gate admission: $10–22.

Members of the Comanche nation converge from all over for the 150th anniversary of the signing of the **Treaty of Fredericksburg,** never broken, that opened up 3 million acres of Indian territory to German settlers, **May 23–26** Fort Martin Scott, 1 mi East of Fredericksburg on Hwy. 290 (210/997-7273).

36th Annual Stonewall Peach JAMboree, a two-day peach extravaganza, features auctions, evening rodeo, children's entertainment, dances, bakeoffs, pit-spitting and peach-eating contests as well as BBQ and other fare, 10am–midnight **June 20–21** Hwy 290, 15 miles east of Fredericksburg (210/644-2735). Admission: $5 (adult), $1 (children 6–12).

The 23rd annual **Willie Nelson's 4th of July Picnic** celebrates Independence Day like no other. More than 20 live acts, including Waylon Jennings, Ray Price, Leon Russell, Lil' Joe and La Familia, the Geezinslaws and Kimmie Rhodes, among others, will be singing from 11am until 11pm in Luckenbach (population 3). The tiny scenic town, which only has a few buildings, was a popular destination in the 1970s when humorist Hondo Crouch, who bought the town in 1971, declared it a "free state ... of mind" and staged such unique festivals as Mud Daubers' Day, the Luckenbach Great World's Fair and a yearly Hug-In. Willie and Waylon made it a famous with the hit song "Luckenbach, Texas (Back to the Basics of Love)." You'll need to bring your own lawn chairs and sunscreen (hats, too) but leave the pets, video-cameras and weapons at home. Gate opens at 8am. RR 1326 off Hwy 290 West, 13.5 east of Fredericksburg. Tickets available through Star Tickets (469-SHOW) or UTTM (477-6060). Tickets $20-something. Parking $5.

The enormous rooms of **Natural Bridge Caverns** in New Bruanfels make this the largest cave in Texas. Accidentally discovered by spelunkers in 1960, this cave, considered one of the nicest in the country, is known for a natural stone bridge across sinkholes and for its large stalagmites. Open daily, the cavern is accessible only by guided tour, which lasts about a hour, from 9am–4pm. Between San Antonio and New Braunfels, off I-35 on RM 3009 (210/651-6101). Admission: $7 adults, $5 children ages 3–11.

Houston

The Bayou City is the only U.S. stop for **Georges Braque: The Late Years,** a rare exhibit of paintings from one of the 20th century's most innovative and influential artists. Organized by the Royal Academy of Arts (London) with the Menil Collection, this distinguished exhibit contains 45 works covering the last 25 years of Braque's life. A complementary exhibit of 25 other works by Braque from the museum's collection, representing every phase of his development, will be on display. 11am–7pm Wed–Sun, **through August**. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. 1515 Sul Ross (713/525-9400). Free.

Once known as a controversial arts institution, **The Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston,** closed for renovation since December, reopens **May 10** with a retrospective of its landmark exhibits, titled "Finders/Keepers," from 1948 to the present. Closed Mondays. 5216 Montrose (713/284-8250). Free.

Jewels of the Romanovs: Treasures from the Russian Imperial Court is another blockbuster exhibit like "Splendors of Ancient Egypt" that spotlights 250 jewels, costumes, artifacts and paintings from the last Romanov dynasty, whose 300-year rule ended with the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. **May 11–July 20**. Hours: 10am–5pm Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat, 10am–9pm Thurs, 12:15–6pm Sun. Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonet (713/625-1200). Tickets $6 at the museum, $8 from ticket outlets.

Round Top

Early Music Festival at Round Top is a four-day weekend of classical music from **May 23 through May 26**, 75 miles from Austin, off Hwy 290 East. Friday's 8pm performance features chamber music by Bach, Stanley and others. *Texas Early Music Project* is at 3 pm, *Music from Hildegard to Bach*, 8pm, May 24. *Texas Baroque Ensemble,* 3pm May 25 and *Bach and Posterity: The First Hundred Years (1750–1850)*, 8pm May 25 and 1pm May 26. *La Follia* is the closing performance at 3pm May 26. Accommodations in bed and breakfasts need to be made well in advance. Institute at Round Top, off Texas Hwy. 237 (409/249-3129). Tickets $10, $5 students.

The **International Festival at Round Top** are weekend concerts of world-class performers playing classical and chamber music from **June 7 through July 12**. This rural music festival, in its 24th season, attracts thousands of music lovers from around the country to its Victorian buildings and picturesque setting. Highlights: **June 7**: All-American program including Bernstein, Copland and Barber, featuring James Dick as soloist; **June 14**: Pascal Verrot conducts an all-French orchestral program that includes Ravel and Berlioz; **June 21**: Stefan Sanderling conducts Brahms' German Requiem; **June 28**: conductor George Pehlivanian closes the orchestral season with Schubert and Brahms. The String Quartet Session rounds out the program with six concerts in July. Institute at Round Top, off Texas Hwy. 237 (409/249-3129). Tickets (no reservations) $10, $5 students, season tickets $150/pair.

San Antonio

H-E-B Science Treehouse in San Antonio is a whimsical, hands-on, interactive science exhibit at the Witte Museum in Brackenridge Park designed to teach children of all ages scientific principles and make them fun, 3801 Broadway (210/357-1900). Mon, Wed–Sat 10am–5pm; Sun noon–5pm; Tues 10am–9pm (free admission 3pm–9pm). Admission: $5.95 adults, $4.95 seniors, $3.95, children ages 4–11, free for those 3 and under.

San Antonio Museum of Art exhibits 100 pieces of silver, ranging from bowls and tankards to tea sets and gravy boats, from San Antonio collectors in "The Age of Elegance: English, Irish and American Silver, 1700–1900" **April19–June 29**. More than 50 watercolors by France's leading 19th-century artist James Tissot are on exhibit **through June 22** in a special showing of J. James Tissot's "Biblical Paintings: A Victorian's View of the Bible." 200 W. Jones Ave. (210/978-8100). Admission: $4 adults, $2 seniors, $1.75 children 4–11. No admission Tuesdays 3–9pm.

Cameron Mackintosh's production of the blockbuster musical **Miss Saigon** stays for almost three weeks, **June 5–22**, 8pm Tues–Sat, 2pm Sat & Sun, and 7pm Sun. Majestic Theater, 230 E. Houston (210/224-9600). Tickets $16–66.

The **Cactus Pear Music Festival**, a week of chamber music, is an engaging week of concerts and related events, **July 5–12**, spread over three cities—San Antonio, Austin and Nuevo Laredo—organized by San Antonio Symphony concertmaster Stephanie Sant'Ambrogio with pianist Jeffrey Sykes plus 14 other artists. The peripatetic festival comes to San Antonio **July 10** with a "Red, White & Blue" program celebrating American music, and again on **July 12** with "The Joy of Sextets," music by Beethoven, Brahms and others at the Laurel Heights United Methodist Church, 227 W. Woodlawn (210/733-7156 or 210/554-1010). Advance tickets $12 individually, $20 for both days and discounts for senior and students; $15 at the door.

Spicewood

Privately owned **Krause Springs** is a favorite family swimming hole whose spring-fed water may be colder than Barton Springs. The creek and pool, shaded by cypress trees, are a welcome respite from the heat, and rock tables are perfect for picnics. There is also overnight camping. Bring drinking water and leave dogs at home. Hours: 9am–sundown. Follow the signs on Spur 191, 7 miles past Pedernales River on Hwy. 71 (210/693-4181). Admission: $3 adults, $2.50 children 4–11 Fri, Sat & Sun (50¢ less during the week).

Winedale

Every summer for 26 years UT students have staged Shakespeare in a barn in the tiny community of Winedale, a 215-acre enclave donated by Ima Hogg, four miles from Round Top, (halfway between Austin and Houston). Two comedies (*Two Gentlemen from Verona* and *The Winter's Tale*) and a drama (*King Richard II*) are this year's offerings, **July 24–Aug 17**. Performances are 7:30pm Thurs–Sun and 2pm Sat & Sun. Most visitors on Saturdays arrive early to feast at 5pm on a hearty stew ($5). Winedale Historical Center, east of Round Top on FM 2714 (409/278-3530). Tickets $5.

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by Kinky Friedman as told to Lin Sutherland

LAST WORD

Hank Williams died in a 1953 Cadillac. I was born in a new green 1953 Plymouth Cranbook convertible driving up Congress Avenue. Spiritually born, that is. I was eight years old and my brother and I were driving with my folks up Congress and looking at the Capitol building and all the lights. We had just moved to Austin, and it was a beautiful city to me then. There's still a lot of beauty here now.

Austin was built on charm. There is something magical about Austin and the whole Hill Country. It has its own feel, and it has the feel of Texas. Parts of it still have a simplicity, an emptiness, a spiritual elbow room that nurtures creative ideas. It's a good place to get to know yourself.

You can't destroy what's here, and I say that as an old Austinite whose favorite restaurants have all been torn down. But every city is subject to creeping homogenization—chain restaurants, chain stores, chain people. I think every city is starting to look like each other—Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and Dallas—to me they all look like Nike Village now. Austin is susceptible to the same influences.

My favorite parts of town are those old-fashioned, one-of-a-kind types of places. Like Dirty Martin's, where they have the only hand-made hamburgers in town, and The Frisco Shop, where a top-chopped steak is the same now as it was 20 years ago. El Rancho still serves up some killer-bee Tex-Mex fare although you really shouldn't miss El Patio. That's where Elvis Presley ate a dozen enchiladas back in the 1950s, and it hasn't changed since then.

There's no place like Austin for live music. One of my favorite nightspots is Antone's, the best blues club outside Chicago, but you can find some great entertainment at Liberty Lunch and La Zona Rosa. Threadgill's serves up some live music every Monday and Wednesday night along with a fine supper any day of the week. Three of my favorite bands—the Geezinslaw Brothers, Jerry Jeff Walker and the Austin Lounge Lizards—play regularly all over town.

Barton Springs is one of the most scenic places in town, whose cold, spring-fed water heals the soul as much as it takes the edge off the heat. I worked there as a lifeguard about the time Willie Nelson was selling Bibles. The Broken Spoke, a real dance hall, is great for folks who like to dance the Texas two-step, listen to authentic Texas music and rub elbows with some real Texas characters.

Then there's the Capitol building, which of course is a few feet taller than the one in Washington. And don't forget Treaty Oak, one of the oldest trees in town, where Stephen F. Austin supposedly signed a peace treaty with the Indians. It was one of the most perfect trees in America until some idiot tried to poison it a few years ago. I'm happy to say it's still hanging on like the rest of us.

DAN GONZALEZ

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